



The Wisdom of the East Series

EDITED BY

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ANTHOLOGY OF  
MODERN INDIAN POETRY



WISDOM OF THE EAST

# ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN INDIAN POETRY

EDITED BY  
GWENDOLINE GOODWIN



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## PREFACE

FRANCIS BACON it was who said Prefaces are great wastes of time and tho they seem to proceed of modesty they are bravery It is necessary however in the present instance to make a stand against the somewhat sweeping convictions of the Elizabethan master The call of Youth in India is a hot young call trumpeting down the ages through a maze of polytheistic tribute and emerging in the twentieth century with some of its original clearness of sound drowned by a Gargantuan thunder of Western drums The Indian poet of to-day is torn like the Indian painter between admiration for Western models and a desire to mould himself thereon, and an inherent Indian tradition that runs in his veins and will not be denied Indeed it is pity to deny it—Sir Edmund Gosse persuaded Sarojini Naidu to tear up her poems about English life and to write of her own Indian bazaars and cities villages and festivals for which persuasion we are indeed indebted to Sir Edmund. We of the West do not want from the East poetic edifices built upon a foundation

of Yeats and Shelley and Walt Whitman We want genuine Taj Mahals and Juma Masjids, cameos of rural sweetness and the hopes of faithful hearts We want to hear the flute of Krishna as Radha heard it, to fall under the spell of the blue god "in the lotus-heart of dreams" For there is much to learn from the melody of Eastern thought It is, perhaps, a minor melody born of the mating of Love and Death, but it has its seed in an innate spiritual rapture that no Western veneer can wholly cover.

In the bulk of Indian poetry religious feeling predominates, as is only natural in a country of many but steadfast faiths

"To act, to think, to feel aright until  
He knows his will as one with Allah's will"

Subjugation of the Self leading to a merging of that Self with God India writes largely from the "Inner Vision" This disallows of foreign influence, but the poet is necessarily inspired as well by an everyday atmosphere which he enriches from the strength of his own perception. The steps of the bathing-ghâts in Calcutta may be of Sheffield cast-iron, but the country that could produce a Taj Mahal—"stone turned into a dream," D G Mukerji calls it—will never lose the innate artistic vision of her soul So the creative prayers of this mighty cosmopolitan multitude surge upwards in a song of glory till they reach the stars. Love of life is love of art

because life is art and art is life We chase after fleeting perfection, a rosy cloud, a glint of eternity in a lily pool, a drop of dew trembling on a flower petal moments of heaven in worlds of chaos To catch a mood of Nature and transfer it to paper to wring from the heart of an instrument one swift emotional phase after another is it futile ? is it useless ?

" Am I one of the trees in the night  
Or are the trees human beings ? "

asks Harindranath Chattopadhyaya in one of his poems not published here echoing the cry of Li Po

" Chuang Chou in a dream became a butterfly  
And the butterfly became Chuang Chou at waking :  
Which was the real the butterfly or the man ? "

In Indian poetry the mystic element shines through the outer decorative aspect

Our dreams and longings cover deeper dreams  
And longings in the silence far away "

We are roused from the beautiful lyrical lilt of Chattopadhyaya and of his sister Sarojini Naidu by the thunder of Muhammad Iqbal's persuasive eloquence He is a barrister-at-law at Lahore an active Moslem opposed to Platonic illusion and non progressive idealism

Plato, the prime ascetic and sage  
Was one of that ancient flock of sheep  
His Pegasus went astray in the darkness of philosophy  
And galloped over the mountains of Being  
He was so fascinated by the Ideal  
That he made head, eye, and ear of no account "

Whether one agrees with his outlook or not, the fact remains that one cannot fail to be stirred by the intensely fiery spirit of Iqbal's rhetorical writing. He is a leader. He sweeps everything before him like a great wind swirling through a forest of pines. He would re-create Islam, an active, non-Imperialistic, non-sensual Islam. In his own words, he is "the voice of the poet of To-morrow." As Mr R. A. Nicholson (his translator) says, the book "Asrar-i-Khudi" (Secrets of the Self), from which I have taken the extracts, "presents certain obscurities which no translation can entirely remove." That is, of course, to European readers or to those not conversant with Persian poetry. For the book was originally written in Persian.

"Although the language of Hind is sweet as sugar,  
Yet sweeter is the fashion of Persian speech."

He is an inspiring philosopher.

"Thou art fire fill the world with thy glow !  
Make others burn with thy burning !

Up, and re-inspire every living soul !"

I have spoken of the Youth of India, but the contributors to this volume range in age from the twenties to the seventies. There is little need for me to speak of Rabindranath Tagore. Mr Edward Thompson (to whom I am indebted for the three translations) has acted in a Boswellian capacity, and the poet is as well known

in England as are the great poets of our own nationality I would draw attention however, to the beautiful concluding lines of 'Urvashi'

On the night of full moon, when the world brims with  
laughter

Memory from somewhere far away pipes a flute that  
brings unrest,

The tears gush out !

Yet in that weeping of the spirit Hope wakes and lives ;  
Ah, Unfettered One ! "

The flute-call of memory bringing restlessness and a strange peace on its liquid cadences And a dimness of tears to stir the dust of Hope to life Ah, Unfettered One ! " I have included some translations of Indian songs as sung by native singers because I thought they might be of interest from an indigenous point of view Dr Ananda Coomaraswamy of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston Mass is responsible for their English rendering The one commencing

Quietly come O Beauty come has a mystical meaning We drift then into the Punjab the Land of Five Waters and find Puran Singh the Sikh poet breathing the musk of God love through nostrils ever open to receive a spiritual fragrance

"The dew is falling everywhere

And wet is every rose.

The gentle breath of heaven blows."

It blows the perfume of the Beauty that is Worship into the heart of this devout enthusiast His mind is a casket that holds the most precious gems of the Sikh religion and ideals and gives

them forth to an unenlightened world Nanak, Gobind, Teg Bahadur, the names of the Ten Masters (whose lives he has written) sound in his ears day and night

The loneliness of exile rings through the quivering poems of Manmohan Ghose.

“Lost is that country, and all but forgotten  
‘Mid these chill breezes ”

All true poets love trees , Manmohan Ghose is no exception

“Willow sweet, willow sad, willow by the river,  
Taught by pensive love to droop, where ceaseless waters  
shiver ”

Mrs Pankajini Basu is represented by one poem, “Basanta Panchami,” a description of the famous Spring Festival One line, in particular, stands out “Ever sorrowful, ever ill-starred, are we women of Bengal, all of us,” and, one might add, ever devout, ever faithful The eternal question of Indian womanhood cannot be dismissed with a shrug of the shoulders Mrs. Naidu’s lines .

“What further need hath she of loveliness  
Whom Death hath parted from her lord’s caress ? ”

seem to strike at the heart of the matter. Time alone will solve a problem which at the moment is very vexed indeed It would seem almost that in their poems these Indian women express all the fullness of their hearts in love-songs, hymns of conjugal devotion, lamentations, praise of

physical beauty and tributes of faith Emotional outlets of warm loyal natures yet always with the underlying sadness that is the birthright of Hind like an anthem at evening or the eyes of a convent sister Melancholy glides like pearly vapour through "The Island Grave" of Sri Aurobindo Ghose

"And I will meet thee in that lonely place  
Then the grey dawn shall end my hateful days  
And death admit me to the silent ways."

Death to the Oriental is a small and yet a great matter He welcomes rather than fears it The body being but the shell of the soul is of little account save perhaps for its procreative value as a creator of further beings in the image of God Death then is a joyful thing and there is but a thin line between the wedding song and the funeral dirge

The blue bird of truth is flying against a sky of such intense blueness as to be almost indistinguishable—Ananda Acharya's blue of Indra. This poet sends his 'snow blossoms' of Indian thought forth from the cool earth of Norway He lives there amid his Arctic Swallows and in his later work has grafted Asian feeling in a curious way upon a shoot of Scandinavian origin There is of course a strange affinity between the Nordic peoples and the Asian The strain flowed through Northern Russia south to Persia and thence into India,



the type gradually changing from blue-eyed, fair-skinned folk to olive skins and "flaming eyes, like thunder skies So deep and dark . . ."

Jehangir Jivaji Vakil's three little poems have not hitherto been published. The one commencing "O long black hair of love" has an almost Japanese brevity, and compresses into four lines quite a wealth of ardent feeling

India is rich in legendary history and does not lack for romantic and dramatic episodes in her actual chronicles. I have, nevertheless, found little of the narrative style of poetry among the modern poets. Historical and legendary references are occasionally met with, but they are usually incidental, and little use has been made of a richly-equipped storehouse. Adil K. Sett has utilised this method in "Roshanara," Inayat Khan in "Tansen," and Tagore (in a measure) in "Urvashi." Apparently the lyrical style or the sonnet-form has the greatest appeal.

Narayan Vaman Tilak was a Christian mystic. His poems breathe all the fervour of the convert.

*"Saith Dasa, Christ, upon Thy pallet-bed  
Grant me a little space to lay my head"*

I have included Zahir, Ghalib, and Amir, because, though not modern in a strict sense, as is, say, Firdous Kabiraji, they have been translated by living people, namely, Mrs J. D. Westbrook and Pir-o-Murshid Inayat Khan.

Whether this is the dawn time of a new era of Indian poetic thought who shall say! These Easterners Bengali Punjabi Hindu Moslem Sikh, Christian have upon their shoulders a yoke of heavy responsibility. They have to support and become worthy of the mighty tradition that lies behind them. Song should be theirs naturally but it is one thing to preserve the metre in their own particular tongues and another to wrestle with the technicalities of English. There are many more modern poets in India from whom I might have chosen but the scope of the book forbids the inclusion of more material.

The Indian twilight descend gentle and swift  
wizard clocks ring out and rend the calm  
The dark rich blue of night peridot studded  
swings a baby moon high above ink palm and  
gleaming tomb The poet sits in contemplation  
The lotus dreams upon the lyric melodies of  
day

GWENDOLINE GOODWIN

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## EDITORIAL NOTE

THE object of the Editors of this series is a very definite one. They desire above all things that, in their humble way, these books shall be the ambassadors of good-will and understanding between East and West—the old world of Thought and the new of Action. In this endeavour, and in their own sphere, they are but followers of the highest example in the land. They are confident that a deeper knowledge of the great ideals and lofty philosophy of Oriental thought may help to a revival of that true spirit of Charity which neither despises nor fears the nations of another creed and colour

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NORTHBROOK SOCIETY,  
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S.W 7

# ANTHOLOGY OF MODERN INDIAN POETRY

## AN INVOCATION

O THOU art as the soul in the body of the uni  
verse  
Thou art our soul and Thou art ever fleeing from  
us  
Thou breathest music into Life's lute  
Life envies Death when death is for thy sake  
Once more bring comfort to our sad hearts !  
Once more dwell in our breasts !  
Once more let us hear Thy call to honour !  
Strengthen our weak love

We are oft complaining of destiny,  
Thou art of great price and we have naught  
Hide not Thy fair face from the empty handed !  
Sell cheap the love of Salman and Bilal !  
Give us the sleepless eye and the passionate  
heart !  
Give us again the nature of quicksilver !  
Show unto us one of Thy manifest signs



That the necks of our enemies may be bowed !  
Make this chaff a mountain crested with fire,  
Burn with our fire all that is not God !  
When the people let the clue of Unity go from  
their hands,

They fell into a hundred mazes  
We are dispersed like stars in the world ,  
Though of the same family, we are strange to one  
another

Bind again these scattered leaves, .  
Revive the law of love !  
Take us back to serve Thee as of old,  
Commit Thy cause to them that love thee !  
We are travellers · give us devotion as our goal !  
Give us the strong faith of Abraham !  
Make us know the meaning of " There is no god " !  
Make us acquainted with the mystery of " except  
Allah " !

I, who burn like a candle for the sake of others,  
Teach myself to weep like the candle  
O God ! a tear that is heart-enkindling,  
Passionful, wrung forth by pain, peace-consuming,  
May I sow in the garden, and may it grow into a  
fire

That washes away the firebrand from the tulip's  
robe !

My heart is with yestereve, my eye is on to-  
morrow

Amidst the company I am alone.

" Everyone fancies he is my friend,

But my secret thoughts have not escaped from  
my heart '

O where in the wide world is my comrade ?

I am the Bush of Sinai where is my Moses ?

I am tyrannous I have done many a wrong to  
myself

I have nourished a flame in my bosom

A flame that seized the furniture of judgment

And cast fire on the skirt of discretion

And lessened with madness the reason

And burned up the existence of knowledge

Its blaze enthrones the sun in the sky

And lightnings encircle it with adoration for ever

Mine eye fell to weeping like dew

Since I was entrusted with that hidden fire

I taught the candle to burn openly

While I myself burned unseen by the world's  
eye

At last flames breathed from every hair of me

Fire dropped from the veins of my thought

My nightingale ploked up the spark-grains

And created a fire-tempered song

Is the breast of this age without a heart ?

Majnún trembles lest Lailá's howdah be empty

It is not easy for the candle to throb alone

Ah ! is there no moth worthy of me ?

How long shall I wait for one to share my grief ?

How long must I search for a confidant ?

O Thou whose face lends light to the moon and the  
stars,

Withdraw Thy fire from my soul !  
 Take back what Thou hast put in my breast,  
 Remove the stabbing radiance from my mirror,  
 Or give me one old comrade  
 To be the mirror of mine all-burning love !  
 In the sea wave tosses side by side with wave  
 Each hath a partner in its emotion.  
 In heaven star consorts with star,  
 And the bright moon lays her head on the knees  
     of Night  
 Morning touches Night's dark side,  
 And To-day throws itself against To-morrow  
 One river loses its being in another,  
 A waft of air dies in perfume  
 There is dancing in every nook of the wine-house,  
 Madman dances with madman  
 Howbeit in Thine essence Thou art single,  
 Thou hast decked out for Thyself a whole world  
 I am as the tulip of the field,  
 In the midst of a company I am alone  
 I beg of Thy grace a sympathising friend,  
 An adept in the mysteries of my nature,  
 A friend endowed with madness and wisdom,  
 One that knoweth not the phantom of vain  
     things,  
 That I may confide my lament to his soul  
 And see again my face in his heart  
 His image I will mould of mine own clay,  
 I will be to him both idol and worshipper.

*Muhammad Iqbal*

## THE SECRETS OF THE SELF

## PROLOGUE

WHEN the world illuming sun rushed upon Night  
 like a brigand  
 My weeping bedewed the face of the rose  
 My tears washed away sleep from the eye of the  
 narcissus,  
 My passion wakened the grass and made it grow  
 The Gardener taught me to sing with power  
 He sowed a verse and reaped a sword  
 In the soil he planted only the seed of my tears,  
 And wove my lament with the garden, as warp  
 and woof  
 Tho I am but a mote the radiant sun is mine  
 Within my bosom are a hundred dawns  
 My dust is brighter than Jamshid's cup  
 It knows things that are yet unborn in the world.  
 My thought hunted down and slung from the  
 saddle a deer  
 That has not yet leaped forth from the covert of  
 non-existence  
 Fair is my garden ere yet the leaves are green  
 Full blown roses are hidden in the skirt of my  
 garment  
 I struck dumb the musicians where they were  
 gathered together  
 I smote the heartstrings of all that heard me

Because the lute of my genius hath a rare melody :  
Even to comrades my song is strange.

I am born in the world as a new sun,  
I have not learned the ways and fashions of the  
sky :

Not yet have the stars fled before my splendour,  
Not yet is my quicksilver astir ;

Untouched is the sea by my dancing rays,  
Untouched are the mountains by my crimson hue.

The eye of existence is not familiar with me ,  
I rise trembling, afraid to show myself

From the East my dawn arrived and routed Night,  
A fresh dew settled on the rose of the world.

I am waiting for the votaries that rise at dawn

Oh, happy they who shall worship my fire !

I have no need of the ear of To-day,

I am the voice of the poet of To-morrow.

My own age does not understand my deep mean-  
ings ,

My Joseph is not for this market.

I despair of my old companions,

My Sinai burns for sake of the Moses who is  
coming

Their sea is silent, like dew,

But my dew is storm-ridden, like the ocean

My song is of another world than theirs

This bell calls other travellers to take the road

How many a poet after his death

Opened our eyes when his own were closed,

And journeyed forth again from nothingness

When roses blossomed o'er the earth of his grave !  
 Albeit caravans have passed through this desert,  
 They passed as a camel steps with little sound.  
 But I am a lover    loud crying is my faith  
 The clamour of Judgment Day is one of my  
     minions

My song exceeds the range of the chord  
 Yet I do not fear that my lute will break.  
 'Twere better for the waterdrop not to know my  
     torrent

Whose fury should rather madden the sea  
 No river will contain my Oman  
 My flood requires whole seas to hold it  
 Unless the bud expand into a bed of roses  
 It is unworthy of my spring-cloud's bounty  
 Lightnings slumber within my soul,  
 I sweep over mountain and plain.  
 Wrestle with my sea if thou art a plain  
 Receive my lightning if thou art a Sinai  
 The Fountain of Life hath been given me to  
     drink,

I have been made an adept of the mystery of  
     Life

The speck of dust was vitalised by my burning  
     song

It unfolded wings and became a firefly  
 No one hath told the secret which I will tell  
 Or threaded a pearl of thought like mine  
 Come if thou wouldst know the secret of ever  
     lasting life !

Come, if thou wouldst win both earth and heaven !  
The old *Guru* of the Sky taught me this lore,  
I cannot hide it from my comrades

O Saki ! arise and pour wine into the cup,  
Clear the vexation of Time from my heart !  
The sparkling liquor that flows from Zemzem—  
Were it a beggar, a king would pay homage to it  
It makes thought more sober and wise,  
It makes the keen eye keener,  
It gives to a straw the weight of a mountain,  
And to foxes the strength of lions.

It causes dust to soar to the Pleiades  
And a drop of water swell to the breadth of the  
sea

It turns silence into the din of Judgment Day,  
It makes the foot of the partridge red with blood  
of the hawk.

Arise and pour pure wine into my cup,  
Pour moonbeams into the dark night of my  
thought,

That I may lead home the wanderer  
And imbue the idle looker-on with restless im-  
patience ,

And advance hotly on a new quest  
And become known as the champion of a new  
spirit ,

And be to people of insight as the pupil to the eye,  
And sink into the ear of the world, like a voice ,  
And exalt the worth of Poesy  
And sprinkle the dry herbs with my tears.

Inspired by the genius of the Master of Rum  
 I rehearse the sealed book of secret lore  
 His soul is the source of the flames  
 I am but as the spark that gleams for a moment  
 His burning candle consumed me the moth  
 His wine overwhelmed my goblet  
 The Master of Rum transmuted my earth to gold  
 And clothed my barren dust with beauty  
 The grain of sand set forth from the desert  
 That it might win the radiance of the sun.  
 I am a wave and I will come to rest in his sea  
 That I may make the glistening pearl mine own  
 I who am drunken with the wine of his song  
 Will draw life from the breath of his words  
 'Twas night my heart would fain lament,  
 The silence was filled with my cries to God.  
 I was complaining of the sorrows of the world  
 And bewailing the emptiness of my cup  
 At last mine eye could endure no more  
 Broken with fatigue it went to sleep  
 There appeared the Master formed in the mould  
     of Truth,  
 Who wrote the Koran of Persia  
 He said ' O frenzied lover  
 Take a draught of love's pure wine  
 Strike the chords of thine heart and rouse a  
     tumultuous strain  
 Dash thine head against the cupping-glass and  
     thine eye against the lancet !  
 Make thy laughter the source of a hundred sighs



Make the hearts of men bleed with thy tears !  
How long wilt thou be silent, like a bud ?  
Sell thy fragrance cheap, like the rose !  
Tongue-tied, thou art in pain  
Cast thyself upon the fire, like rue !  
Like the bell, break silence at last, and from every  
limb  
Utter forth a lamentation !  
Thou art fire fill the world with thy glow !  
Make others burn with thy burning !  
Proclaim the secrets of the old wine-seller ,  
Be thou a surge of wine, and the crystal cup thy  
robe !  
Shatter the mirror of fear,  
Break the bottles in the bazaar !  
Like the reed-flute, bring a message from the reeds ;  
Give to Majnún a message from Lailá !  
Create a new style for thy song,  
Enrich the feast with thy piercing strains !  
Up, and re-inspire every living soul !  
Say ' Arise ! ' and by that word quicken the  
living !  
Up, and set thy feet on another path ,  
Put aside the passionate melancholy of old !  
Become familiar with the delight of singing ,  
O bell of the caravan, awake ! ''  
At these words my bosom was enkindled  
And swelled with emotion like the flute ,  
I rose like music from the string  
To prepare a Paradise for the ear.

I unveiled the mystery of the Self  
 And disclosed its wondrous secret.  
 My being was as an unfinished statue  
 Uncomely worthless good for nothing  
 Love chiselled me I became a man  
 And gained knowledge of the nature of the  
 universe

I have seen the movement of the sinews of the sky  
 And the blood coursing in the veins of the moon  
 Many a night I wept for Man's sake  
 That I might tear the veil from Life's mysteries  
 And extract the secret of Life's constitution  
 From the laboratory of phenomena  
 I who give beauty to this night like the moon  
 Am as dust in devotion to the pure Faith [Islam]—  
 A Faith renowned in hill and dale  
 Which kindles in men's hearts a flame of undying  
 song

It sowed an atom and reaped a sun,  
 It harvested a hundred poets like Rumi and Attar  
 I am a sigh I will mount to the heavens  
 I am a breath yet am I sprung of fire  
 Driven onward by high thoughts my pen  
 Cast abroad the secret of this veil,  
 That the drop may become co-equal with the sea  
 And the grain of sand grow into a Sahara  
 Poetising is not the aim of this *masnavi*  
 Beauty worshipping and love-making is not its  
 aim.

I am of India Persian is not my native tongue

I am like the crescent moon my cup is not full  
Do not seek from me charm of style in exposition,  
Do not seek from me Khansar and Isfahan  
Although the language of Hind is sweet as sugar,  
Yet sweeter is the fashion of Persian speech.  
My mind was enchanted by its loveliness,  
My pen became as a twig of the Burning Bush.  
Because of the loftiness of my thoughts,  
Persian alone is suitable to them  
O Reader, do not find fault with the wine-cup,  
But consider attentively the taste of the wine  
*Muhammad Iqbal*

### WORSHIP

You flood my music with your autumn silence  
And burn me in the flame-burst of your spring  
Lo ! through my beggar-being's tattered garments  
Resplendent shines your crystal heart, my King !  
Like a rich song you chant your red-fire sunrise,  
Deep in my dreams, and forge your white-flame moon  
You hide the crimson secret of your sunset,  
And the pure golden message of your moon.  
You fashion cool-grey clouds within my body,  
And weave your rain into a diamond mesh  
The Universal Beauty dances, dances  
A glimmering peacock in my flowering flesh !  
*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.*

## BEYOND THE VERGE OF TIME

OUR dreams and longings cover deeper dreams  
 And longings in the silence far away  
 All things on earth sweet winds and shining  
     clouds  
 Waters and stars and the lone moods of men  
 Are cool green echoes of the voice that sings  
 Beyond the verge of Time Between two cries  
     of aught  
 Of aught on earth wakes the eternal fire  
 Wherein the destiny of heaven is wrought  
 For what is heaven but the earth grown full,  
 And God but man unshadowed and afar ?

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*

## STEPS

EACH moment when we feel alone  
 In this great world of rush and riot  
 Is as a jewelled stepping-stone  
 Which leads into the House of Quiet

Within it dwell the ancient seers  
 Beyond unreal griefs and cares  
 Beyond unreal smiles and tears  
 Beyond the need of chant and prayers

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*

## EGO

A BEAUTY that ever eludes these fleshly eyes  
And fingers and lips . . .  
Ere I can catch one gleam of the starry skies  
The mystery slips,

Leaving an empty, desolate, mocking moan  
In the little heart that greedily sought to hold  
Vast beauty within its shadowy grasp and own  
Elusive, starry gold !

Who are you, feeble, shadow-robed elf,  
Striving again and again in vain to capture  
Wealth of the deep, the shining, ineffable rapture  
Which is the Self beyond self ?

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya.*

## FIRE

KINDLE your glimmering lamp in the infinite  
space, O Love !  
Let the dark shadows dance in the burning depths  
of mine eyes  
I am athirst for one glimpse of your beautiful  
face, O Love !  
Veiled in the mystical silence of stars and the  
purple of skies.

Thrill me with radiant rapture O Love ! of your  
ravishing flute  
Folding my silence in song and my sorrow in  
silver eclipse  
Shaping my heart into flower and the flower of  
my heart into fruit  
Meet for your orchards of light and touch of  
your luminous lips

Cast in the shadowy deeps of my being your  
love like a spark,  
Fan it to magical flame till my dead heart burst  
into fire  
Swing like a censer my dream of devotion O  
Love ! through the dark,  
Turn into tumults of incense my richly pulsating  
desire !

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*

## THE ARTIST

THE selfsame radiant ecstasy  
Which wrought the tempest & giant wrath  
Has painted gorgeous dream-designs  
So delicately on the moth  
The selfsame luminous agony  
Which shaped the lightning & fiery claw  
Has carved in utmost tenderness  
A summer flower without a flaw

The selfsame motherhood which made  
The awful mystery of death  
Has built the body of a child  
And lit its limbs with golden breath  
The selfsame miracle which moves  
In silent mystery apart  
Has struck the secret melody  
Which dances shyly in my heart

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*

### IMAGERY

HE has fashioned the stars and the moons to the  
music

Of innermost-flowering joy and desire,  
He has tried his own love for himself through the  
ages

By flooding his limbs with unquenchable fire  
Of creation that dances and bubbles and flutters  
In peacocks, in seas, and the hearts of the birds  
Behind the rich silence of red-running sunsets  
And cool-coloured sundawns he utters his words

He is finding for ever his infinite fullness  
In blossoming buds and the withering flowers  
He shapes through the heart of the world his  
Ideal

So white in the midst of the many-hued hours  
He weaves a fine trammel of marvellous colours  
Around and about him in utter delight,

Till straight through the darkness his laughter  
comes lambent

Birdlike from a cage in a freedom of flight

*Harindranath Chattopadhyaya*

## I

## TRANSCIENCE

FORGIVE this wrong

That of your beauty I have made

Only a passing song

Only a white-flower song that will fade

Ere I have time to lay it beneath

The shaped beauty of your feet

*Jehangir Jivaji Vakil*

## II

## O LONG BLACK HAIR

O LONG black hair of love

In your dark shades a dove

My heart circles in rings

Beating white wings

*Jehangir Jivaji Vakil*

## REVELATION

I HAVE dreamt on many rain-dim eyes

: Beauty folded in the flowers and leaves

Spraying the grass with laughter as with light

Of shaken pearls that lit her hair a dark night

But never dreamed her eyes so deep might be

As those with which last eve you gazed at me

*Jehangir Jivaji Vakil*



## SPRING THAT IN MY COURTYARD

SPRING that in my courtyard used to make  
 Such riot once, and buzzing laughter lift,  
 With heaped drift—  
 Pomegranate-flowers,  
*Kanchan*, *parul*, rain of *palas*-showers,  
 Spring whose new twigs stirred the woods awake,  
 With rosy kisses maddening all the sky,<sup>1</sup>  
 Seeks me out to-day with soundless feet,  
 Where I sit alone Her steadfast gaze  
 Goes out to where the fields and heavens meet,  
 Beside my silent cottage, silently  
 She looks and sees the greenness swoon and die  
 Into the azure haze

*Rabindranath Tagore*

## THIS DAY WILL PASS

I KNOW this day will pass,  
     This day will pass—<sup>2</sup>  
 That one day, some day,  
 The dim sun with tender smiling  
 Will look in my face,  
     Looking his last farewell  
 Beside the way the flute will sound,

<sup>1</sup> The new leaves are red, *are* the rosy kisses Also, *palas* and pomegranate both have red blossoms

<sup>2</sup> This poem deliberately takes off from the loveliest of all Bengali popular songs, Ramprasad's "This day will surely pass, this day will pass" (see *Bengali Religious Lyrics*, Thompson and Spencer, Oxford University Press)

The kine will graze on the river bank,  
The children will play in the courtyards,

The birds will sing on

Yet this day will pass

This day will pass

This is my prayer

My prayer to Thee

That ere I go I may learn

Why the green Earth

Lifting her eyes to the sky

Called me to her

Why the silence of the Night

Told me of the stars

Why the Day's glory

Raised waves in my soul.

This is my prayer to Thee

When Earth's revolutions

For me are ended

In the finishing of my song

Let me pause a moment

That I may fill my basket

With the flowers and fruits of the Six  
Seasons<sup>1</sup>

That in the light of this life

I may see Thee in going

That I may garland Thee in going

With the garland from my own throat—

When Earth's revolutions for me are ended

*Rabindranath Tagore.*

<sup>1</sup> India has six seasons to our four

URVASI<sup>1</sup>

THOU art not Mother, art not Daughter, art not  
Bride !

Thou beautiful, comely One,  
O Dweller in Paradise, Urvasi !

When Evening descends on the pastures, drawing  
about her tired body her golden cloth,

Thou lightest the evening lamp within no home  
With hesitant, wavering steps, with throbbing  
breast and downcast look,

Thou dost not go, smiling, fearful, to any belovèd's  
bed,

In the hushed midnight  
Like the rising Dawn, thou art unveiled,  
Unshrinking One !

<sup>1</sup> Urvasi, in older (i.e. Sanskrit) mythology, is a famous courtesan and dancing-girl at the court of Indra, King of the Gods. Her adventures were many, she was often sent to lure sages aside from their devotions, lest they obtained super divine powers and threatened the dominion of the Gods (see stanza 4). But in Tagore's poem she is very much more than her legendary character. The poem is a tangle—Indian mythology, modern science, European romance. She is the cosmic spirit of life, in the mazes of its eternal dance, she is Beauty dissociated from all human relationships, she is that world enchanting Love which (though not in Dante's sense) "moves the sun and other stars," is Lucretius's *hominum divumque voluptas*, *Alma Venus*, is Swinburne's "perilous goddess," "sea foam born."

I have adopted a quasi-metrical form which I hope will indicate the general outline of the stanza in which this magnificent ode is written.

Like some stemless flower blooming in thyself  
When didst thou blossom Urvasi ?  
That primal Spring thou didst arise from the  
churning of Ocean :  
In thy right hand nectar venom in thy left  
The swelling mighty Sea like a serpent tamed  
with spells  
Drooping his thousand towering hoods  
Fell at thy feet !  
White as the *kunda* : blossom a naked beauty  
adored by the King of Gods  
Thou flawless One !  
Wast thou never bud never maiden of tender  
years  
O eternally youthful Urvasi ?  
Sitting alone under whose dark roof  
Didst thou know childhood's play toying with  
gems and pearls ?  
At whose side in some chamber lit with the  
flashing of gems  
Lulled by the chant of the sea waves didst thou  
sleep in coral bed  
A smile on thy pure face ?

<sup>1</sup> When the Gods churned the Ocean, to recover the lost nectar of immortality Urvasi first appeared one of many good and bad things that came to light. With the nectar came out poison, which threatened the life of all creatures, till Shiva drank it to save the world. Tagore has invented Urvasi's responsibility for the nectar and poison being brought forth ; at any rate, I know of no other authority for line 4 of this stanza.

<sup>2</sup> A *jasmine*

That moment when thou awakedst into the  
 universe, thou wast framed of youth,  
 In full-blown beauty !

From age to age thou hast been the world's  
 beloved,

O unsurpassed in loveliness, Urvasi !

Breaking their meditation, sages lay at thy feet  
 the fruits of their penance ,

Smitten with thy glance, the three worlds<sup>1</sup> grow  
 restless with youth ,

The blundered winds blow thine intoxicating  
 fragrance around ,

Like the black bee, honey-drunken, the infatuated  
 poet wonders, with greedy heart,

Lifting chants of wild jubilation !

While thou . . thou goest with jingling anklets  
 and waving skirts,

Restless as lightning !

In the assembly of Gods, when thou dancest in  
 ecstasy of joy,

O swaying Wave, Urvasi !

The companies of billows in mid-ocean swell and  
 dance, beat on beat ,

In the crests of the corn the skirts of Earth  
 tremble ,

<sup>1</sup> In Sanskrit mythology, heaven, the atmosphere, and earth, in later mythology, generally heaven, earth, and the underworld

From thy necklace stars fall off in the sky  
Suddenly in the breast of man the heart forgets  
itself  
The blood dances !  
Suddenly in the horizon thy zone bursts  
Ah wild in abandon !

On the Sunrise Mount of Heaven thou art the  
embodied Dawn  
O world-enchancing Urvasi !  
The slimmness of thy form is washed with the tears  
of the Universe  
The ruddy hue of thy feet is painted with the  
heart's blood of the three worlds ,  
Thy tresses disrobed from their braid thou hast  
placed thy light feet  
Thy lotus feet on the lotus of the blossomed  
Desires of the universe !  
Endless are thy masques in the mind's heaven  
O Comrade of dreams !

-

Ah hear what crying and weeping everywhere  
rises for thee  
O cruel, deaf Urvasi !  
Ah will that Ancient Prime ever revisit this  
earth !  
From the shoreless unfathomed deep wilt thou  
ever rise again, with wet looks !  
First in the First Dawn that Form will show !

In the startled gaze of the universe all thy limbs  
 will weep,  
 The waters flowing from them !  
 Suddenly the vast Sea, in songs never heard  
 before,  
 Will thunder with its waves !

She will not return, she will not return ! That  
 Moon of Glory has set,  
 She has made her home on the Mount of  
 Setting,<sup>1</sup> has Urvasi !  
 Therefore to-day, on earth, with the joyous  
 breath of Spring  
 Mingles the long-drawn sigh of some eternal  
 separation !  
 On the night of full moon, when the world brims  
 with laughter,  
 Memory, from somewhere far away, pipes a  
 flute that brings unrest,  
 The tears gush out !  
 Yet in that weeping of the spirit Hope wakes  
 and lives ,  
 Ah, Unfettered One !

*Rabindranath Tagore*

<sup>1</sup> In Indian mythology, there are Mounts of Sunrise and Sunseting

## OPEN THOU THY DOOR OF MERCY

ALL my guilt of old sin upon sin, put far, far away Give O Lord give in my heart the melody of a new song

To stir to life my withered unfeeling heart near to death and poor play thy melody on the *bind* taking over a new tune

As in Nature thy sweetness overflows so let thy compassion wake in my heart

In the midst of all things may thy loving face float before my eyes May no rebel thought against thy wish ever wake in my heart

Day by day before I set foot in life's forest may I crave thy blessing and so advance my Lord.

Setting thy commands upon my head may I with unfaltering care accomplish my every task in the remembrance of thy feet

Giving to thee the fruit of my task fulfilled at the end of day may my wearied spirit and body find rest

Hurrying have I come from far away knowing thee compassionate A hundred hindrances there were to my coming How many thorns fill the path to my goal. So to-day behold! my heart is wounded my life is dark. Hurrying have I come from far away knowing thee compassionate



Open thou thy door of mercy. My raft of life drifts on the boundless ocean Fearlessness art thou, and ever powerful Nought have I, I am weak and poor My heart is thirsting for thy lotus feet The day is now far spent Open thou thy door of mercy. My raft of life drifts on the boundless ocean.<sup>1</sup>

*Hemantabālā Dutt*

Tr. Miss Whitehouse.

## THE DANCER

Lo ! the heavy rain has come ! With loosened tresses densely dark, lo ! the sky is covered. Lightnings rend the thick darkness over the mountains All around, to my heart's content, I see that beauty has burst forth

See, frolicsome, she pours forth her loveliness in a thousand streams ! Her raiment, hastily flung around her in disarray, mad passion in her eyes, with the voice of the *pāpriyā*, full of sweetness and pity, she sings

Slowly move her feet Slipping, slipping, falls her loosely hanging scarf Her heart throbs with tumultuous feeling As if a flood of beauty overflows, her green jacket of emerald grass displays the hue of her radiant beauty all around

The anklets on her feet, keeping time, ring out

<sup>1</sup> From the *Mādhavī*

in swift succession as if they were sweet cymbals  
 Round her lovely throat hangs her chain of  
 emerald parrots The rain has ceased and she  
 garbs herself in silken robes brodered with  
 diamond raindrops

She gladdens the eye On the treetops birds  
 play on golden tambourines Is the dancer  
 dancing in Indra's hall, casting restless glances  
 here and there? Urbasī<sup>1</sup> puts off the chain of  
 jewels from her breast

How gay her laughter! How fair a dance  
 her tinkling footsteps weave! Her bracelets  
 and bangles circle glittering She is girdled  
 with melody of murmuring swans For her  
 earth and sky swoon away overflowing with love

Her hands touched the *bindī*<sup>2</sup> and by her  
 spell enthralled my infatuated heart Tears  
 stream from my eyes infatuation floods my  
 heart The witch to-day has melted my timid  
 heart Lo! the heavy rain has come

*Ārūpamā Debi*

Tr Miss Whitehouse

## ACKNOWLEDGMENT

THEE among all men do I honour  
 Thee among all men do I know  
 Lo! in the beauty of all thee do I see

<sup>1</sup> Sanskrit *Urvasī*.

<sup>2</sup> *I.e.* the bind, the lute

In the mouth of all I have heard, I have heard  
The sweet voice of thy lips.

Thee this time I have sought and found ;  
Thee amongst all do I worship ,  
Lo ! I for all have given my life.

To the work of all amongst all  
I have devoted my heart <sup>1</sup>

*Nirūpamā Debī*

Tr. Miss Whitehouse

## REMEMBRANCE

TO-DAY I shall not indulge in lovers' quarrels  
I shall not open the ledger and calculate debit and  
credit

Only, once again, I shall fill my heart with re-  
membrance of thee :

*Prīyambadā Debī*

Tr Miss Whitehouse.

## THE VISIBLE

DEAREST, I know that thy body is but transi-  
tory , that the kindled life, thy shining eyes,  
shall be quenched by the touch of death, I know ,

<sup>1</sup> From the *Kanyādhūp*.

<sup>2</sup> From the *Patralekha*

that this thy body the meeting place of all beauty in seeing which I count my life well lived shall become but a heap of bones I know Yet I love thy body Day by day afresh through it have I satisfied a woman's love and desire by serving thy feet and worshipping thee On days of good omen I have decked thee with a flower-garland on days of woe I have wiped away with my *sūri* end thy tears of grief O my lord I know that thy soul is with the Ever lasting One yet waking suddenly some nights I have wept in loneliness thinking how thou didst drive away my fear clasping me to thy breast And so I count thy body as the chief goal of my love as very heaven<sup>1</sup>

*Priyambadū Debi*

Tr Miss Whitehouse

## IN THE LIGHT

We are indeed children of Light What an endless mart goes on in the Light! In the Light is our sleeping and waking the play of our life and death

Beneath one great canopy in the ray of one great sun slowly very slowly burn the unnumbered lamps of life

In the midst of this unending Light I lose

<sup>1</sup> From the *Paṭralekha*.

myself ; amidst this intolerable radiance I  
wander like one blind

We are indeed children of Light. Why then  
do we fear when we see the Light ? Come, let  
us look all around and see, here no man hath  
cause for any fear

In this boundless ocean of Light, if a tiny  
lamp goes out, let it go , who can say that it  
will not burn again ?

*Mrs Kāminī Roy*

Tr Miss Whitehouse

### CALL AND BRING HER

SHE went on the wrong way , she has come back  
again , afar off she stands, her head bowed down  
with shame and fear , she does not step forward,  
she cannot raise her eyes—go near, take her  
hand, call her and bring her

To-day turn not your face away in silent  
reproach , to-day let eyes and words be filled  
with the nectar of love What good will come  
from pouring scorn on the past ? Think of her  
dark future, take her by the hand and bring  
her

Lest for lack of love this shamed soul fling  
away repentance, bring her, call and bring her  
She has come to give herself up , bind her fast  
with loving arms , if she goes to-day, what if  
she never comes again ?

By one day's neglect, one day's contempt and

anger you will lose a life for ever Do you not purpose to give life ? Neglect is a poisoned arrow with sorrowing pardon bring her call and bring her

*Mrs Kāmini Roy*  
Tr Miss Whitehouse

BASANTA PANCHAMI<sup>1</sup>

TO-DAY after a year on the sacred fifth day Nature has flung away her worn raiment and with new jewels see with fresh buds and new shoots she has begemmed herself and smiles. The birds wing their way singing with joy ah how lovely ! The black bee hums as if with sound of Ulu ! ulu ! he wished good fortune to Nature The south breeze seems to say as it flits from house to house To-day Bināpāni<sup>2</sup> comes here to Bengal Arrayed in guise that would enrapture even ages maid Nature has come to worship thy feet O propitious one ! See O India at this time all pay no heed to fear of plague famine earthquake all put away pain and grief and gloom to-day all are drunk with pleasure For a year Nature was waiting in hope for this day to come Many folk in many a fashion now summon thee O white-armed one

<sup>1</sup> "Spring fifth" is the fifth day of the light fortnight of the month of Māgh when Sarasvatī the goddess of letters and wisdom, who loves the rind lute is worshipped The month of Māgh corresponds to January February

<sup>2</sup> I.e. the goddess who carries the rind, or lute in her hand.

I also have a mind to worship Thy two feet are red lotuses, but, say, with what gift shall we worship thee, O mother Bīnāpāni? Ever sorrowful, ever ill-starred are we women of Bengal, all of us Yet if thou have mercy, this utterly dependent one will worship thee with the gift of a single tear of devotion shed on thy lotus feet Graciously accept that, and in mercy, O white-aimed one, grant this blessing on my head on this propitious, sacred day, that this life may be spent in thy worship, Mother

*Pankajinī Basu*

Tr Miss Whitehouse

### A WOMAN'S BEAUTY

ROUND the black eyes are eyebrows looking like  
a bow

They are not frightened at all, and they shoot  
their arrows with certainty

Seeing the precious ear-rings with pearls and  
beautiful settings,

Even the moon with all the stars is filled with  
shame

I cannot describe the beauty of the lips, cheeks,  
teeth, and nose,

Even Śesh Nāg,<sup>1</sup> seeing the beautiful hair, sighs  
deeply

*Śrī Sarasvatī Devī*

Tr Mrs Keay.

<sup>1</sup> The thousand-headed snake of Heaven

## AN EVENING ON THE LAGOON

WITHDRAWN in silence from the raging sea  
 Behind the dark and waving grove of palm  
 In glorious solitude at even calm  
 We glide at water's edge towards the lee  
 Away from busy haunts Eternity  
 And Love the burden of our rapturous psalm  
 As neath the star lit heaven we breathe the  
 balm  
 Of Nature's stillness lulling you and me  
 To dream in soft ethereal realms of bliss  
 Where flits no darkening shadow dwells no care  
 And all is sweetness and ecstatic light  
 The plighted faith renewed with every kiss  
 Of fervent gratitude for all our share  
 Of blessed weal in life by day and night  
*P Seshadri*

## AT THE TEMPLE

THREE little girls were on the temple-stair  
 Waiting for worship at the inner shrine  
 Their tiny hands betrayed a hidden sign  
 Of weariness devoid of strength to bear  
 Their wealth of luscious fruit and offerings rare—  
 But still they stood. What shall the Gods  
 assign  
 To crown your lives? I asked what blessings  
 find



Will cheer with happiness your faces fair ? ”

“ A mass of glittering jewels,” said one child,

“ Bracelet and necklace, shining gold waist-band

And pearl ear-drop ” “ Fine robes of richest lace

And gayest foam-spun silk,” another willed

The third, with head bent down and trembling hand,

Whispered, “ A lovely partner on life’s ways ”

*P Seshadri*

### RAKSHA BANDHAN

A PIECE of silken tassel tipped with gold,

Tied round the hand by loving sister’s hands,

A sacred day in *Sravan*, when the lands

Are bathed in welcome rain, is said to hold

A potent charm for good From days of-old

This pretty faith has come and happy bands

Of brothers still pay heed to its commands

One day each year Who will be rashly bold

And flout this festival as void of worth—

An ancient mummary—to which man shows

His slavish piety ? Let him, who knows

Of beings more devoted than the fair,

Of wishes purer than a sister’s care,

And stronger powers than woman’s love on earth,

*P. Seshadri*

## LONGINGS

WERE I a mighty Master swaying Art  
 In all her lovely forms surpassing fair  
 And robed in magic mystery aware  
 Of cunning artist-craft a mind and heart  
 Aglow with Beauty's sacred spark, a part  
 Of God's creative light! If I could share  
 The gift of breathing life-infusing air  
 In canvas draw thy rapturous sweetness start  
 The portrait beaming bright in loveliness  
 The sculptor's skill—to shape thy limbs divine  
 In living marble show thy beauty's prime!  
 Shall I encrowned with laurel sing for Time  
 Eternity and Universe enshrine  
 Thy name for ages scorning storm and stress?  
*P Seshadri*

## THOUGHTS

WHEN midnight hours know not the peace of  
 sleep  
 But drudge in trembling hope for envied fame  
 In ghostly solitude before a flame  
 Of glimmering light whose sombre rays out-peep  
 To view the city wrapped in silence deep  
 Midst weird and darkly waving groves of  
 palm  
 When wizard clocks ring out and round the  
 calm

With strides of Time—their thrilling voices creep  
Along the soul, my mind with labour worn,

Or grappling with a knot, delights to stand  
In stillness, yearning forth to clasp with love  
Thy beauteous form—and then, Spring opes  
above !

With blossom'd flow'r and chirping bird, the  
land

Smiles 'neath the sunlit hues the heavens adorn !

*P Seshadri*

### THE LOVERS

FROM the rose-gardens of Time, fragrant and  
fresh, in ecstasies of light—Day has come ! How  
many an age of silent love hath breathed and  
breathed upon his cheeks that tender flush of  
rose ?

The blue in his eyes—from what lakes of  
enchantment hath he drunk ? The radiant colours  
of his thought—from what infinite wonder hath  
he made ? The glory of his love for whom, for  
whom hath he brought ? For whom, for whom  
the music of his clouds, his winds, his birds ?  
The secrets of his soul for whom, for whom ?

A Lotus-bud has opened, ere she was born  
the pain of a vast music did fill and fill her soul  
with a vain constant hope, in the ecstasy of  
that pain she bloomed into flower.

The Lotus dreams upon the lyric melodies of  
Day

In the sunset hush of evening she folds her  
petals upon the memories of Day enwoven with  
her fragrant devotions

In the secrecy of Night she sings her praise  
making the deeps of the dark melodious

The glory of his love for whom for whom doth  
he bring ? For whom for whom the music  
of his clouds his winds his birds ?

The secrets of his soul for whom for whom ?  
*Fredoon Kabraji*

### A BLUE DREAM

WHERE her two lips  
Meet or part  
Leaps all my heart  
Like the swift ship's  
Lurch on the lucent wave—  
Past peril and the grave !

Where her two eyes open or close  
Upon the rose kissed snows  
Of her face  
From my soul doth rise  
Of its grace  
A white star in their skies !

But if she smile  
Or weave of her mouth a word,

Swiftly a light steals  
Half my mind, while  
Her word falls all unheard !  
And a blue mist reels  
Half curtaining my mind,  
As a blue dream reels  
In the heart of the blind  
Circling a remembrance  
Of meadows and streams,  
Of blossoms that open and lights that dance,  
And passions that struggle to live in dreams !  
*Fredoon Kabraji*

### TULIP

TULIP, tell me, what do you hold in your cup ?

I hold in my cup the magic that swells the  
thirst of your soul, O Mother, when you look on  
the form of your child, the opiate that fills your  
dream, Mother, with the awe of the Unknown !

But, Tulip, tell me, why do you guard your  
magic beyond the wing of melody ?

Because, ere Thought was, a kiss of Love did  
capture Death in the Seed of Life That is  
why no melody of Life can hold all the magic  
in my cup, Mother, that is why Love cannot hold  
your child in Life alone !

*Fredoon Kabraji.*

## RETURN TO KHAIRPUR

Thy greens grow pearls thy sunsets roses fair  
 My wandering heart returned to stay with thee  
 In shades of eve to breathe thy cooler air,  
 That brings refreshment promised long to me  
 I love thy water wheels that sing to sleep  
 The playful twilight Autumn's moody child,  
 The flames that from thy fields and pinfolds leap  
 Like lights that lead the hearts by Pan beguiled  
 I love thy country maids with water jars  
 Whose graceful coveys rural charms enhance  
 I love thy palms that gaze at distant stars  
 And upward draw the earth-encumbered glance  
 I love thy lake with silver trailing flowers  
 Whose wavelets fondly hold the starry skies  
 The moon, entranced by calm of midnight hours,  
 In violet bed on lily petals lies  
 No more the eyes of homesick longings pine  
 To watch the sphere remote where stars abound  
 But like thy lake that holds its love divine  
 My heart within hath longed for heaven found  
*Elaa Kazi*

## INDIA—ENTERTAINING TWILIGHT

To India's comely cottage Twilight hied  
 Salam my lass! resplendent Twilight cried  
 A sumptuous fare prepare! since noon I  
 tried

To come this way            but ah ! the glowing day  
                                  did stay  
 With thee !            Fresh milk and fried chapatis  
                                  bring ,  
 Do not forget thy hubble-bubble, dear,  
 For lots of dreamy cheer !  
 From out thy hair the withered lily fling ,  
 Don fine array, with pearls thy tresses lay, and  
                                  play  
 Thy vīnā, dance and sing !  
 One stolen hour is mine , that little while  
 With haunting notes of *suri-raag* beguile  
 And let me see thy flaming eyes, as thunder skies  
 So deep and dark, with mystic lightnings bright ,  
 With ' Duhals ' wake what slumbering lies, the  
                                  past let rise  
 All yesterdays to pageant gay, invite  
 Be swift, my sweet !  
 The meat and chutney let us eat  
 The hour, my sweet,  
 Is fleet , from night I must retreat !  
 Already muezzin's mellow call resounds in mango  
                                  grove ,  
 And temple bells, that wake the gods, the hearts  
                                  to worship move ,  
 Come hither, dear !            The moments flee !  
 Salam, my love,  
 Salam ! ''

And India, sun-burnt India, sweetly blushed ,

Salam ! I'll hasten ! answered she and  
brushed

From off her braid the faded lily—crushed  
By day's embrace she sped, with joy her face  
a blaze

To milk the goats to fry the cakes in ghee  
Cabob pullau the dates and honey brought  
And hubble-bubble sought

With smiles of Sindian hospitality  
With peri-grace she soared about the place to  
trace

Each thing that added glee  
To Twilight's hour a rich repast she spread  
Before her guest who sliced the mangoes red  
'Neath palms beside the well and stream  
his eyes a gleam

With dusk, he watched where night in forests  
hid

And vexed with prying silver beam his crimson  
dream

While India humming low her braids undid.  
With rustling sound

Unbound, her tresses sought the ground  
With silvery sound

She wound her pearls in orient found  
Her silk-apparel jasmin-decked kissed rugs of  
golden cloth

With henna'd hands she swirled her veil, as frail  
as wings of moth

- Her vine struck with bended knee



"Salam," she quoth .

"Salam ! "

She shot as lightning up . then paused and  
smiled ,

Then round she spun in trance, as dervish wild ,  
In rainbow hue she flew, with flowers piled ,  
A flame a-whirl, with passion red, each curl  
a-twirl,

As Indra's temple-dancer, maddening hearts  
Her lips with kisses scarlet !—Eyes aglow  
Now moved she sly and slow

As Punjab tigress ere for prey she starts  
Then did unfurl a smock as white as pearl  
a girl

Of pious Southern parts

She turned, gazellean-soft and meek her glance,  
The rosary and censer graced her dance ,  
A fragrant bud of womanhood, divinely good ,  
But soon her measure ceased with rhythmic  
thrill

In Delhi's wealth arrayed she stood, in soaring  
mood

Then danced again, to show her perfect skill !  
With flourish bold

And gold a-flash, now anklets told ,  
Her footsteps bold

Controlled a battle march of old !

She forward dashed as amazon of Rajput's desert  
side,

Her eyes with 'valour all a-flame so proudly did  
 she stride  
 Wah ! Wah ! so Twilight cheered and  
 she  
 Salam replied  
 ' Salam !

Her Jadoo-veil now changed the scene and lo !  
 In clouds she danced thro' Kashmeer's mountain  
 snow  
 Thro' jungle glooms and tombs of gold below  
 By Ganges led, where orchards blossoms shed,  
 she sped  
 'Mid Koels as Gopi, or as Rama's queen  
 With shimmering ivory limbs and rubied brow  
 As Moghul princess now  
 She sat mid slaves on throne of Jasper sheen  
 Now made her bed on elephant's broad head, and  
 fled  
 As Jin thro' plantains green.  
 Then rose as butterfly from out her shawl  
 All poised o'er lucid lakes of Taj Mahal.—  
 The hour had slipped, and night at last approached  
 so fast  
 And Twilight donned his turban chilled with  
 fright  
 The hookah-stick, he dropped aghast and India  
 cast  
 Her jewelled slipper at her guardian Night  
 Who gently sailed

And trailed the stars       but Twilight quailed  
And westward sailed !  
All veiled in mists he drooped and paled !  
Her lacquered cradle India spread for moonlit  
    night to rest,  
Namaskar made with folded hands ! . . . half  
    serious, half a-jest,  
She fibbered . " Twilight hit at thee . . .  
Salam, my best  
Salam ! "

*Elsa Kazi*

### ROSHANARA

The Queen Roshanara is sad and weeps in the  
absence of her lord in battle Her maidens  
strive to comfort her .

WITH this, to the couch  
Whereon lay the Queen, so shaken  
With voices she heard  
And dreams she dreamt  
And visions she saw  
To her they brought rose-petals  
In their hands, and musks in baskets,  
Perfuming her But she was  
Terror-stricken still  
Then with a wild clash of  
Tambourines they fell to  
An air of joyous happiness,

Sweetly soared the voice  
Like that of a nightingale  
Of the chief maiden who  
Sang of the wind

' North wind and south wind,  
West wind and east wind  
Thou shalt not moan  
But blow blow  
Gently on my Lady's cheeks, blow  
And thou O great sea  
Thou shalt not wail,  
But sweetly lull my Lady to sleep

' Red leaf and green leaf and all ye withered  
leaves  
Ye shall not turn the lawns into a wilderness  
For my Lady is sad  
And to see ye thus would make her sadder still  
Great trees and small trees  
Ye shall not shake and shiver  
When my Lady walks  
But ye shall serve her as a good shade

Great birds and small birds and all ye humming  
birds  
Ye shall not wail mourning elegies  
But shall twitter and your little throats shall  
quiver  
In an ecstasy of delight.

Ye shall sing of sweet joy,  
 Ye shall make my Lady happy.

“ And ye Fairies and Cherubs,  
 Ye Queens of the Dreams,  
 And Kings of the Shadows,  
 Of the hidden people and the Unknown,  
 Ye shall not approach my Lady,  
 For her heart sinks with fright,  
 And she trembles like a leaf  
 That is thrown from the branches  
 With the wind's force  
 All ye unknown, be banished  
 From my Lady, to your land  
 Of Mystery and Heart's Desire,  
 To your land of Eternal Youth.”

*Adi K. Sett*

### IN PRAISE OF HENNA

A KOKILA called from a henna-spray  
*Lra ! lree ! Lra ! lree !*  
 Hasten, maidens, hasten away  
 To gather the leaves of the henna tree.  
 Send your pitchers afloat on the tide,  
 Gather the leaves ere the dawn be old,  
 Grind them in mortars of amber and gold,  
 The fresh green leaves of the henna tree

A kokila called from a henna-spray  
*Lra ! lree ! Lra ! lree !*

Hasten maidens, hasten away  
To gather the leaves of the henna tree  
The *tikka* s red for the brow of a bride  
And betel nut s red for lips that are sweet  
But for lily like fingers and feet  
The red the red of the henna tree

*Sarojini Naidu*

### IMPERIAL DELHI

IMPERIAL City ! dowered with sovereign grace  
To thy renaescent glory still there clings  
The splendid tragedy of ancient things  
The regal woes of many a vanquished race  
And memory's tears are cold upon thy face  
E'en while thy heart s returning gladness rings  
Loud on the sleep of thy forgotten Kings  
Who in thine arms sought Life s last resting place

Thy changing Kings and Kingdoms pass away  
The gorgeous legends of a bygone day  
But thou dost still immutably remain  
Unbroken symbol of proud histories  
Unageing priests of old mysteries  
Before whose shrine the spells of Death are vain

*Sarojini Naidu*

## DIRGE

*(In sorrow of her bereavement)*

WHAT longer need hath she of loveliness,  
Whom Death has parted from her lord's caress ?  
Of glimmering robes like rainbow-tangled mist,  
Of gleaming glass or jewels on her wrist,  
Blossoms or fillet-pearls to deck her head,  
Or jasmine garlands to adorn her bed ?

Put by the mirror of her bridal days . . .  
Why needs she now its counsel or its praise,  
Or happy symbol of the henna leaf  
For hands that know the comradeship of grief,  
Red spices for her lips that drink of sighs,  
Or black collyrium for her weeping eyes ?

Shatter her shining bracelets, break the string  
Threading the mystic marriage-beads that cling  
Loth to desert a sobbing throat so sweet,  
Unbind the golden anklets on her feet,  
Divest her of her azure veils and cloud  
Her living beauty in a living shroud

Nay, let her be !      what comfort can we give  
For joy so frail, for hope so fugitive ?  
The yearning pain of unfulfilled delight,  
The moonless vigils of her lonely night,  
For the abysmal anguish of her tears,  
And flowering springs that mock her empty years ?

*Sarojini Naidu.*

## SPRING

YOUNG leaves grow green on the banyan twigs  
 And red on the peepul tree  
 The honey birds pipe to the budding figs  
 And honey blooms call to the bee

Poppies squander their fragile gold  
 In the silvery aloe-brake  
 Coral and ivory lilies unfold  
 Their delicate lives on the lake

Kingfishers ruffle the feathery sedge  
 And all the vivid air thrills  
 With butterfly wings in the wild-rose hodge  
 And the luminous blue of the hills  
*Sarojini Naidu*

## CRADLE-SONG

FROM groves of spice  
 O'er fields of rice  
 Athwart the lotus-stream  
 I bring for you  
 Aglint with dew  
 A little lovely dream.

Sweet shut your eyes,  
 The wild fire-flies



Dance through the fairy *neem* ,  
From the poppy-bole  
For you I stole  
A little lovely dream.

Dear eyes, good-night,  
In golden light  
The stars around you gleam ,  
On you I press  
With soft caress  
A little lovely dream

*Sarojini Naidu*

### JUNE SUNSET

HERE shall my heart find its haven of calm,  
By rush-fringed rivers and rain-fed streams  
That glimmer thro' meadows of lily and palm.  
Here shall my soul find its true repose  
Under a sunset sky of dreams  
Diaphanous, amber, and rose.  
The air is aglow with the glint and whirl  
Of swift wild wings in their homeward flight,  
Sapphire, emerald, topaz, and pearl,  
Afloat in the evening light

A brown quail cries from the tamarisk bushes,  
A bulbul calls from the cassia-plume,  
And thro' the wet earth the gentian pushes  
Her spikes of silvery bloom.

Where'er the foot of the bright shower passes  
Fragrant and fresh delights unfold  
The wild fawns feed on the scented grasses  
Wild bees on the cactus-gold.

An ox-cart stumbles upon the rocks  
And a wistful music pursues the breeze  
From a shepherd's pipe as he gathers his flocks  
Under the pipal trees  
And a young Banjara driving her cattle  
Lifts up her voice as she glitters by  
In an ancient ballad of love and battle  
Set to the beat of a mystic tune  
And the faint stars gleam in the eastern sky  
To herald a rising moon.

*Sarojini Naidu*

### BUNKIM CHANDRA CHATTERJI

How hast thou lost O month of honey and  
flowers  
The voice that was thy soul ! Creative showers  
The cuckoo's daylong cry and moan of bees  
Zephyrs and streams and tender blossoming trees  
And murmuring laughter and heart-easing tears  
And tender thoughts and great and the compeers  
Of lily and jasmine and melodious birds,  
All these thy children into lovely words  
He changed at will and made soul moving books  
From hearts of men and women's honeyed looks

O master of delicious words ! the bloom  
Of *champak* and the breath of king-perfume  
Have made each musical sentence with the noise  
Of women's ornaments and sweet household joys  
And laughter tender as the voice of leaves  
Playing with vernal winds    The eye receives,  
That reads these lines, an image of delight,  
A world with shapes of spring and summer, noon  
and night ,

All nature in a page, no pleasing show  
But men more real than the friends we know.  
O plains, O hills, O rivers of sweet Bengal,  
O land of love and flowers, the spring-bird's call  
And southern wind are sweet among your trees  
Your poet's words are sweeter far than these.  
Your heart was this man's heart    Subtly he knew  
The beauty and divinity in you  
His nature kingly was and as a god  
In large serenity and light he trod  
His daily way, yet beauty, like soft flowers  
Wreathing a hero's sword, ruled all his hours.  
Thus moving in these iron times and drear,  
Barren of bliss and robbed of golden cheer,  
He sowed the desert with ruddy-hearted rose,  
The sweetest voice that ever spoke in prose.

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose*

## A ROSE OF WOMEN

Now lilies blow upon the windy height  
 Now flowers the pansy kissed by tender rain  
 Narcissus builds his house of self-delight  
 And Love's own fairest flower blooms again  
 Vainly your gems O meadows you recall  
 One simple girl breathes sweeter than you all.

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose.*

*(Meleager)*

## THE ISLAND GRAVE

OCEAN is there and evening the slow moan  
 Of the blue waves that like a shaken robe  
 Two heard together once one hears alone

Now gliding white and hushed towards our  
 globe  
 Keen January with cold eyes and clear  
 And snowdrops pendent in each frosty lobe

Ushers the firstborn of the radiant year  
 Haply his feet that grind the breaking mould,  
 May brush the dead grass on thy secret bier

Haply his joyless fingers wan and cold  
 Caress the ruined masses of thy hair  
 Pale child of winter dead ere youth was old

Art thou so desolate in that bitter air

That even his breath feels warm upon thy face ?  
Ah ! till the daffodil is born, forbear,

And I will meet thee in that lonely place,  
Then the grey dawn shall end my hateful days  
And death admit me to the silent ways

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose.*

### INVITATION

WITH wind and the weather beating round me

Up to the hill and the moorland I go  
Who will come with me ? Who will climb with  
me ?

Wade through the brook and tramp through  
the snow ?

Not in the petty circle of cities

Cramped by your doors and your walls I dwell ;  
Over me God is blue in the welkin,  
Against me the wind and the storm rebel

I sport with solitude here in my regions,

Of misadventure have made me a friend.  
Who would live largely ? who would live freely ?  
Here to the wind-swept uplands ascend

I am the lord of tempest and mountain,

I am the Spirit of freedom and pride

Stark must he be and a kinsman to danger  
Who shares my kingdom and walks at my side  
*Sri Aurobindo Ghose.*

## A CHILD'S IMAGINATION



O thou golden image  
Miniature of bliss  
Speaking sweetly speaking meetly !  
Every word deserves a kiss  
  
Strange remote and splendid  
Childhood's fancy pure  
Thrills to thoughts we cannot fathom  
Quick felicities obscure

When the eyes grow solemn  
Laughter fades away  
Nature of her mighty childhood  
Recollects the Titan play

Woodlands touched by sunlight  
Where the elves abode  
Giant meetings Titan greetings  
Fancies of a youthful God.

These are coming on thee  
In thy secret thought  
God remembers in thy bosom  
All the wonders that He wrought  
*Sri Aurobindo Ghose*

## EVENING

A GOLDEN evening, when the thoughtful sun  
 Rejects its usual pomp in going, trees  
 That bend down to their green companion  
 And fruitful mother, vaguely whispering—these  
 And a wide silent sea. Such hour is nearest God,  
 Like rich old age when the long ways have all  
 been trod.

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose*

## THE SEA AT NIGHT

THE grey sea creeps half-visible, half-hushed,  
 And grasps with its innumerable hands  
 These silent walls I see beyond a rough  
 Glimmering infinity, I feel the wash  
 And hear the sibilation of the waves  
 That whisper to each other as they push  
 To shoreward side by side—long lines and dim  
 Of movement flecked with quivering spots of  
 foam,  
 The quiet welter of a shifting world

*Sri Aurobindo Ghose.*

## LACHHI

*From a well-known Panjābī folk-song*

AHA ! When Lachhi spills water,  
 Spills water, spills water, spills water,  
 There sandal grows—where Lachhi spills water.

Ahā ! Lachhi asks the girls  
 The girls the girls the girls  
 Oh what coloured veil suits a fair complexion !

Ahā ! The girls said truly  
 Said truly said truly said truly  
 A veil that is black becomes a fair complexion

What then your fortune Lachhi !  
 Your fortune Lachhi your fortune Lachhi, your  
     fortune Lachhi !  
 Ho ! your boy like the moon what then your  
     fortune !

Who'll give you milk to drink, Lachhi !  
 Drink Lachhi, drink Lachhi, drink Lachhi !  
 Your friendship with the goatherds is sundered !  
 Who'll give you milk to drink !

[This song is sung to a purely folk air not in  
 any definite *rāg*]

### AZME

*Note*—The story goes that Gāmī wrote the song about a girl of Kutahār (a village in the Maraz pargana of Kāshmir) named Azmē and that it became the occasion of trouble for its author. Complaints were made about Gāmī, and his father reported the matter to the Tah sildār of the district but the poet explained



that Azmē meant “ to-day ” and that the whole song had only a Sufī significance.

Azmē, love of thee came to me, fortunate vision !  
Azmē, show me thy face, O darling  
*Azmē, love of thee, etc.*

Say where shall I wait, in Shāngas or Naugām ?  
An ill name I got in Kutahār !  
*Azmē, love of thee, etc.*

I sought thee in Achhaval, Brang, Kutahār—  
Lakhs of hardships I suffered, my darling

Pomegranate thy cheeks, or *saza-posh*—  
How dark are thine eyes, my darling !

Shining thy brows as though with sweat—  
How many a one thy nose has slain, my darling !

Sitting by the door, choosing saffron flowers,  
I know not for whom, my darling !

What a famous spinning-wheel is there in  
Kolgām,  
Matchless its handle, my darling !

Silver are the strings of thy spinning-wheel,  
Those who see it fall ill with wonder, my darling !

Skilfully pounding the rice so fine,  
The good shape of the cypress has Azmē, my  
darling !

Bright is her dress as a pearl,  
Short are the plaits of Azmē my darling !

Slowly combing her hair so fine—  
I will count up thy plaits my darling !

Kāmader has passed through Kutahār  
All folk to him must yield (!), my darling !

Hapless Māhmud where shall he wait for thee ?  
An ill name I won in Kutahār my darling !

*Māhmud Gāmī*

## AWAKE MY FRIEND

AWAKE, my friend !  
Be glad spring has come !

Spread jasmine on the balconies  
Lasting is the glory of jasmine !

From afar I saw the Beloved come hither,  
That *Hour* came to my courtyard !

Breast to breast he embraced me before the  
people  
Openly was his coming to be seen by any !

Ah, burn my blood to clots of fondness,  
Accomplish (in my heart) the love of Islam !

These things thou shouldst not reveal among  
drunkards,  
Lest to-morrow there be reproach !

Māhmud Vāzah will tell the secret of Love,  
Hans Rāja shall he be named !

*Māhmud Vāzah.*

### MARRIAGE SONG

SPRING has come, with almond blossom,  
All about Shārikā Dēvī !  
Flower-beds are walled about—  
Flowers I'll offer, night and morn !

Spring has come, with almond blossom,  
All about Rāginyā Dēvī !  
Lotus flowers are walled about—  
Milk I'll pour her, night and morn !

Spring has come, with almond blossom,  
All about Zālā Dēvī !  
Mint-plants are walled about—  
Pūjā I'll make, night and morn !

Spring has come, with almond blossom,  
All about Shīvajī !

Sandal trees are walled about—  
I will anoint Him night and morn !

Spring has come with almond blossom  
All about Nārāyan !  
Tulsi plants are walled about—  
Saffron I'll rub night and morn !

*Ananda Coomaraswamy*

*Note*—By the names Shārikā Rāginyā etc are meant places as well as the divinities worshipped Thus Shārikā (Sati, Pārvatī) is Hari Parbat where there is a festival to Shārikā in March Rāginyā (Kīr Bavānī) is an island at Inlamul where there is a festival in May Zālā (another form of Pārvatī) is a hill where there is a festival in June Shivajī is a village in the Zainager pargana Nārāyan is a tīrtha near Bāramuta

## MYSTIC LOVE SONG FROM THIRTY INDIAN SONGS

*Quietly come, O Beauty come !  
O ! cups of wine I'll fill for thee  
Come to our house O Beauty come  
Come as a guest O Beauty come  
Quietly come O Beauty come !*

Borders twain thy veil adorn ;  
 At early dawn, O Beauty, rise—  
*Quietly come, O Beauty, come !*

A silken border thy veil adorns ,  
 Father has sent thee a cradle of bells—  
*Quietly come, O Beauty, come !*

Hast thou come from the heavens, O lovely bird ?  
 Wilt come by thyself, or a snare shall I spread ?  
*Quietly come, O Beauty, come !*

He who made this golden bracelet,  
 Was he only a goldsmith and never a master of  
 craft ?

*Quietly come, O Beauty, come !*

*Ananda Coomaraswamy*

## THE PUNJAB AUTUMN : THE SEASON OF THE COOLING DEW

*(Composed on the birthday of Guru Nanak, 1916)*

### I

THE piping of the rain-birds has ceased,  
*Dadar* and *peepya* are silent now,  
 The dance of the peacock is over,  
 It is the season of the cooling dew !  
 The dew is falling everywhere,  
 And wet is every rose  
 — The gentle breath of heaven blows

## II

The clouds have stopped their thunder  
The lightning has hidden her spark,  
The floods of the Punjab rivers have rolled away  
The rivers have shrunk low  
The storm is over and the winds blow soft and  
slow  
It is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere,  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows

## III

The sweet sweet dew wets all with joy  
Wet with joy are the night and the moon  
And dewdrops quiver over the stars on high  
And joy wet blows the wind on my face  
It is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere,  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows

## IV

The cool soft touches of the falling dew calm my  
soul  
And my mind blessed with the dew joys calm  
and cool is at rest !  
My beloved ! come to me as the dew of my eyes !

Come to-day as the dew cometh !  
 And cool my soul parched by the pain of long,  
     long separation !  
 My beloved ! it is the season of the cooling dew !  
 The dew is falling everywhere,  
 And wet is every rose  
 The gentle breath of heaven blows

## V

O master of the order of the *Seli* !<sup>1</sup>  
 O dweller of heaven !  
 O great giver !  
 My Guru Nanak ! Come to me to-day !  
 O light of lights !  
 Thy seats are the sun and the moon !  
 My beloved ! return to me to-day !  
 It is the season of the cooling dew !  
 The dew is falling everywhere,  
 And wet is every rose  
 The gentle breath of heaven blows

## VI

It is the season of slumber and dew  
 Cruel is all separation !  
 Pray remove the distances that divide me from  
     thee  
 My beloved ! it is the season of the cooling dew !

<sup>1</sup> *Seli*, or the small round string made of black wool that  
 Guru Nanak used to wear at times

The dew is falling everywhere  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows

## VII

My love ! stay no more in distant lands away  
from me !  
Come into the vacant courtyard of my heart !  
Dye my soul with the joys of thy presence  
And make it now thy home  
Stay at home ! Go no more out of me !  
Dwell in my soul, before my eyes !  
And for ever be there the perennial draught of my  
eyes  
My love ! it is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows.

## VIII

Fill my tearful gaze for ever with thy celestial  
face  
And let my eyes be for ever wet with the joy  
of seeing thee !  
My love ! dwell for ever in my eyes !  
It is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows



## IX

It is now the dewy season,  
The season of the happy meetings of love,  
The season of the quenching of all fires of pain.  
To me everything seems to be dew-wet ;  
From the blue of heaven the dew is falling soft ;  
It is the dew of deep, deep unions ;  
And wonder and worship is in the eyes.  
The separated ones shall meet !  
It is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere,  
And wet is every rose.  
The gentle breath of heaven blows

## X

Now is the time of everlasting embraces !  
My beloved ! come, meet me to-day !  
Take me to thy bosom !  
The dew is flooding things with joy.  
My love ! come to me !  
It is the season of the cooling dew !  
The dew is falling everywhere,  
And wet is every rose  
The gentle breath of heaven blows

## XI

The dew cometh from heaven down !  
It bringeth heavenly peace for all  
It wetteth all with sweetness.  
Invisible, it raineth deep into souls.

It raineth love and peace and joy  
 It raineth sweetness  
 Dew ! dew ! my comrades !  
 It is the season of the cooling dew !  
 The dew is falling everywhere  
 And wet is every rose  
 The gentle breath of heaven blows

(Trans.) *Puran Singh*  
*(Nārgās Bhai Vir Singh)*

### RAJHANS (THE PRINCE OF SWANS)

RAJHANS ! The Golden Swan ! Is it thy  
 plumage that shines or the sunrise on the eternal  
 snows ?

The dweller of *Mān-Sarōvar* the lake on the  
 roof of the world ! Thy golden beak parts milk  
 from water in the living stream thou art a  
 liberated soul !

A rosary of spotless pearls is in thy beak,  
 and how sublime is the lofty curve of thy neck  
 against the Heavens vast azure !

Thou livest on pearls the nectar drops so  
 pure of Hari Nam

Great Soul ! lover of the azure transparent  
 Infinite ! Thou canst not breathe out of the  
*Mān-Sarōvar* air nor canst thou live out of  
 sight of those loftiest peaks of snow and away  
 from the diluted perfume of musk blowing from  
 the wild trail of the deer !

Thou art the spirit of Beauty thou art far

beyond the reach of human thought Thy  
isolation reflecteth the glory of the starry sky in  
thy Nectar Lake of Heart in whose waters the  
sun daily dips himself !

Thou hast the limitless expanse of air, the  
companionship of fragrant gods,

And yet we know thou leavest those Fair  
Abodes to come to share the woes of human  
love ,

Thou alightest unawares on the grain-filled  
barn of the humble farmer, awakening Nature's  
maiden hearts, thou informest love

It is thy delight to see woman love man, the  
small ripples of a human heart in love flutter  
thee in thy lofty seat.

Thou art the soul liberated through love , thou  
knowest the worth of love, flying for its sake  
even midst the cities' smoke and dust, perchance,  
to save a human soul through love !

“ Sisters of the Spinning-Wheel ” .

*Puran Singh*

## LATER LYRICS POPLAR, BEECH, AND WEeping WILLOW

### I

SHAPELY poplar, shivering white, poplar like a  
maiden,  
Thinking, musing softly here, so light and so  
unladen,

That with every breath and stir perpetually you  
gladden

Teach me your still secretles of thought that  
never sadden

From the heavy hearted earth earth of grief and  
passion

Maiden would you spring with me and leave  
men a lowly fashion

Skyward lift with me your thoughts in cumberless  
elation

Every leaf and every shoot a virgin aspiration

The blue day the floating clouds the stars shall  
you for palace

Proffer their cathedral pomp dawn her rosy  
chalice

Where the birds are you shall throng and revel to  
be lonely

In the blue of heaven to spire and sway with  
breezes only

## II

Beech of leafy isles the queen beech of trees the  
lady

Soaring to a tower of sighs in branches soft and  
shady

You that sunward lift your strength, to make of  
shadow duty

Teach me tree your heavenly height and  
earth remembering beauty

Maiden, would you soar like me, with day-  
upclouding tresses,  
Beauty into bounty change, bend down the  
eye that blesses ,  
Make from heaven a shelter cool, to shepherd and  
sheep silly  
Shadowing with shadiness, hot rose and fainting  
lily

Through your glorious heart of gloom, the noon-  
day wind awaking  
In an ecstasy shall set swaying, blowing,  
shaking ,  
Leafy branches, in their nests set the sweet birds  
rocking  
Till their happy song break out, the noonday  
ardour mocking.

Willow sweet, willow sad, willow by the river,  
Taught by pensive love to droop, where ceaseless  
waters shiver,  
Teach me, steadfast sorrower, your mournful  
grace of graces ;  
Weeping to make beautiful the silent water-  
places.

Maiden, would you learn of me the loveliness of  
mourning,  
Droop into the chill, wan wave, strength,  
hardness, lofty scorning ,

POPLAR BEECH, AND WILLOW 93

Drench your drooping soul in tears content to  
love and languish

Gaze in sorrow's looking-glass, and see the face  
of anguish ?

In the very wash of woe as your bowed soul  
shall linger

You shall touch the sheer bright stars and on  
the moon set finger

You shall hear where brooks have birth the  
mountain pine's emotion

Catch upon the broadening stream the sound  
and swell of ocean

*Manmohan Ghose.*

ORPHIC MYSTERIES THE YELLOW  
BUTTERFLY

Of all shy visitants I love  
That darling butterfly  
Whose wings are to the cornfield's wave  
A hovering reply

Yellow as dancing wheat-ears ripe  
He suns with his gay youth,  
And feeds me with the gold of light  
The thrice-tried gleam of truth

When glooming back upon myself  
The garden path I pace  
He comes and makes my gladdened eyes  
The dial to his grace

Unfailing omen, punctual sign !  
No sooner am I out,  
He hovers by on golden wings  
To chase the grey of doubt.

All melancholy thoughts to thresh,\*  
Winnow the blissful grain  
Of immortality, and sift  
From mortal fear and pain.

Day after day the marvel grows ;  
Ever his gladsome morn  
Shines down the blackness of my grief  
With glancing wings of scorn

Now from the creeper's bowery height,  
Now o'er the garden wall ;  
From far-off places, or where first  
The wonder did befall

In that low bed of coxcomb flowers  
Beneath her window-sill,  
Her chamber-window, where he warms  
Homeward my spirit still ,

Or plumb-down from the soaring roof  
He to my awful eye  
His radiant message angels me  
From azure depths of sky.

I cannot with ungrateful heart  
 Feel God's fair world a blank.  
 Straight for the sunny thought of her  
 His yellow wings I thank.

I cannot still her sight to want  
 Weep like a thwarted boy  
 Cry outright but with darting gold  
 He chides me back to joy

The stupor of the miracle  
 Ever renewed the fear  
 I lose in charmed tranquillity  
 For she my saint is here

Who works it? No dead relic sweet  
 Of her my living saint  
 Perfect beyond the skill of thought  
 Of fancy's power to paint

Whole from her suffering martyrdom  
 She is arisen No tomb  
 Could hold her no far blissful heaven  
 Allure Her heaven is home

No place more holy than these walks  
 This garden where the flowers  
 Swing censers breathing up to God  
 This house a Book of Hours



No room but memory's sacred hand,  
Gilded, illuminate,  
Paints how she suffered, loved and died—  
The legend of her fate.

In heaven she is ; beatitude  
To her ; her loved ones still,  
So loving she, here, here, enskyed  
To guard It is God's will.

Here in the old sweet home where, still  
A guardian spirit, she  
Heals, comforts, counsels, and performs  
Her angel ministry

*Manmohan Ghose.*

### MYVANWY

OfT hast thou heard it, that old true saying,  
'Tis like and unlike makes the happiest music.  
Then, gravely smiling, scorn me not, Myvanwy,  
Fairest of maidens

Thou who in sunlight sittest, pensive leaning  
At the open window, thy hand deep-buried  
In dark sweet clusters of thy hair, and gazest  
O'er the wide ocean

Yes, o'er the ocean far, far in the distance,  
Is my own country, and other soil bore me

Than thy dear birthplace other sun than England's  
Nourished my spirit

Yet for this slight not my heart as alien  
What can green England show to match those  
regions  
Save thyself only what hath she that merits  
Prouder remembrance ?

Nothing ! nor any shore that hears the Ocean  
Nothing can match their beauty ! If Myvanwy  
Had but an exile's sad heart in her bosom  
She too would say so

She too would say so and back in thought  
returning  
How would her sweet eyes fill with tears of glad  
ness  
How would she marvel the lovely maiden  
Breathless with gazing !

There stretching lonely do the giant mountains  
Rise with their ages of snows to heaven  
Snows, the heart shudders so far away seem they  
Fearfully lovely

There is the tall palm like her own dear stature  
The land's green lady and riotously hang there,  
All for Myvanwy's lips the strange, delicious  
Fruits of the tropics

And the vast elephant that dreams for ages,  
Lost among dim leaves and things of old, re-  
members

Would he not, rousing at her name's sweet  
rumour,

Pace to behold her ?

Oh me ! what glories would her eyes enkindle,  
Eyes with their quick imaginative rapture !  
How shall I picture to her all the strangeness,  
All the enchantment,

In that enchanted land of noon ? My heart  
faints

And my tongue falters for long ago, Myvanwy,  
Deep in the east where now but evening gathers,  
Lost is my country.

Long ago hither in passionate boyhood,  
Lightly an exile, lightly leagues I wandered  
Over the bitter foam so far Fate led me  
Only to love thee

Lost is that country, and all but forgotten  
'Mid these chill breezes, yet still, oh, believe me,  
All her meridian suns and ardent summers  
Burn in my bosom.

*Manmohan Ghose.*

## KISMET

BEFORE our births Kussam who makes our fate  
 Ordained us happy or unfortunate  
 And wrote upon our brow and on our hands  
 The signs that tell to him who understands  
 Our Destiny decreed for good or ill.  
 So pass the Wise bending to Allah's will  
 Their lives into His mighty hands resigned.

One child is cherished one to hands unkind  
 Is given one dies in life's first shining dawn  
 One longs to die but Death when called upon  
 Turns from the supplicating voice his ear  
 One starves in poverty one is Amir  
 And drives his elephant in lordly state  
 One lives in love one girdled round with hate  
 Dwells ever in a bitter world of strife  
 One in the moment of this earthly life  
 Is ruler sitting on a regal seat  
 One crawls a slave obedient at his feet

And Allah changes all as He desires,  
 He is an artist whom His art inspires  
 This world the picture He is painting still.  
 But with his share of fate He gave man will  
 To fashion circumstance by its control,  
 To make a path of healing for his soul,  
 To act to think, to feel aright until  
 He knows his will as one with Allah's will.

*Inayat Khan*

## TANSEN

TANSEN, the singer, in great Akbar's Court  
Won great renown, through the Badshahi Fort  
His voice rang like the sound of silver bells  
And Akbar ravished heard The story tells  
How the King praised him, gave him many a  
gem,  
Called him chief jewel in his diadem.  
One day the singer sang the Song of Fire,  
The Deepak *Rāg*, and burning like a pyre  
His body burst into consuming flame.  
To cure his burning heart a maiden came  
And sang Malhar, the song of water cold,  
Till health returned, and comfort as of old  
"Mighty thy Teacher must be and divine,"  
Great Akbar said, "magic indeed is thine,  
Learnt at his feet." Then happy Tansen bowed  
And said, "Beyond the world's ignoble crowd,  
Scorning its wealth, remote and far-away  
He dwells within a cave of Himalay"  
"Could I but see him once," desired the King,  
"Sit at his feet awhile, and listening  
Hear his celestial song, I would deny  
My state and walk in robes of poverty"  
Then said Tansen, "As you desire, Huzoor,  
Indeed 'twere better as a slave and poor  
To come, for he, lifted above the things

Of earth disdains to sing to earthly kings  
 Long was the road and Akbar as a slave  
 Followed Tansen who rode towards the cave  
 High in the mountains At the singer's feet  
 They knelt and prayed with supplication sweet  
 Towards thy shrine lo we have journeyed  
 long

O Holy Master bless us with thy song !  
 Then Ostad won by their humility  
 Sang songs of peace and high felicity  
 The Malkous *Raga* all ecstatic rang  
 Till birds and beasts enchanted as he sang  
 Gathered to hear O'er Akbar's dreaming soul  
 He felt the waves of heavenly rapture roll,  
 But as he turned to speak his words of praise  
 Ostad had vanished from his wondering gaze

Tell me Tansen what theme this is that holds  
 The soul enchanted and the heart enfolds  
 In high delight and, when he knew the  
 name

Tell me again he said, could you the same  
 Theme sing to lure my heart to paths untrod ?  
 ' Ah no to thee I sing he sings to God

*Inayat Khan*

THE high ambition of the drop of rain  
 Is to be merged in the unfettered sea  
 My sorrow when it passed all bounds of pain  
 Changing became itself the remedy

Behold how great is my humility !

Under your cruel yoke I suffered sore ;  
Now I no longer feel thy tyranny,  
I hunger for the pain that then I bore

Why did the fragrance of the flowers outflow

If not to breathe with benediction sweet  
Across her path ? Why did the soft wind blow  
If not to kiss the ground before her feet ?

*Ghalib.*

How difficult is the thorny way of strife

That man hath stumbled in since time began !  
And in the tangled business of this life  
How difficult to play the part of man !

When she decrees there should exist no more

My humble cottage, through its broken walls,  
And cruelly drifting in the open door,  
The frozen rain of desolation falls.

O mad Desire, why dost thou flame and burn

And bear my soul further and further yet  
To the Belovéd ? Then, why dost thou turn  
To bitter disappointment and regret ?

Such light there gleams from the Belovéd's face<sup>o</sup>

That every eye becomes her worshipper,  
And every mirror, looking on her grace,  
Desires to be the frame enclosing her.

Unhappy lovers, slaves of cruel chance  
 In this grim place of slaughter strange indeed  
 Your joy to see unveiled her haughty glance  
 That flashes like the scimitar of Ede

When I had hardly drawn my latest breath,  
 Pardon she asked for killing me Alas !  
 How soon repentance followed on my death,  
 How quick her unavailing sorrow was !  
*Ghalib*

Thy beauty flashes like a sword  
 Serene and keen and merciless ,  
 But great as is thy cruelty  
 Even greater is thy loveliness.

It is the gift of God to thee  
 This beauty rare and exquisite  
 Why dost thou hide it thus from me ?  
 I shall not steal nor sully it.

And as thy beauty shines in Heaven  
 There climbs upon its path of fire  
 The star that lights my rival's way  
 And with it mounts his heart's desire.

Even in thy house is jealousy  
 Thy youth demands the lover's praise  
 Over thy beauty which itself  
 Is jealous of thy gracious ways.



I died with joy when winningly  
I heard the Well-Beloved call—

Zahr, where is my beauty gone ?

Thou must have robbed me after all

*Zahr.*

I SHALL not try to flee the sword of Death,

Nor, fearing it, a watchful vigil keep,

It will be nothing but a sigh, a breath,

A turning on the other side to sleep

Through all the close entanglements of earth

My spirit shaking off its bonds shall fare

And pass, and rise in new unfettered birth,

Escaping from this labyrinth of care

Within the mortal caravansera

No rest and no abiding place I know,

I linger here for but a fleeting day,

And at the morrow's summoning I go.

What are these bonds that try to shackle me ?

Through all their intricate chains my way I  
find,

I travel like a wandering melody

That floats untamed, untaken, on the wind.

From an unsympathetic world I flee

To you, your love and fellowship I crave,

O Singers dead, Sauda and Mushafi,

I lay my song as tribute on your grave

*Amn.*

## VOICE IN THE AIR

*The vaulted roof opens The guests feel that  
a Being is entering from above. They see nothing,  
but all hear a voice in the air*

HIGH above the clouds in the Home of Light I  
dwell

My days are passed in the peace of Great Under  
standing

For their welfare do I visit men in all corners of  
the earth

At the command of the Mother I move up and  
down East and West showering the rays of  
Freedom upon all

The Mother is the Circle I am but a curve

The Mother is the Whole I am but a part

The Mother is the Opening Lotus I am but a  
single petal

The Mother is the Ocean of Honey I am but a  
thirsty bee

Men call me Lord of the Sky and Father of the  
Heavens They know naught who speak  
thus

I am the Space and its all infilling Light and the  
sight in Man's eyes which sees them both

I am the Sense whereby Man knows the Quarters

I dwell in peace encompassing all these living  
orbs of light

I know the secret of the Primal Song , the gods  
are all the offspring of a Song, by them un-  
heard ,

I keep the record of men's thoughts in my infinite  
House of Sky ;

From æon to æon I hold up the Mirror of Thought  
to each man's mind, to lead him across the  
shoreless Sea of Mirage ;

Yet I do but the bidding of the Mother of Eternal  
Power ,

I am in all hearts, save only those where Love is  
not

*The Being rises up through the open roof, and  
the guests hear his voice dying away in the far-off  
sky The vault of the Hall closes The southern  
door opens A Being enters They hear his voice.*

#### VOICE IN THE AIR

By the will of the Mother I am the Lord of the  
Air ,

I reign over all who breathe ,

I carry sweet fragrance from ocean to ocean ;

My song is heard in the mountain forest, but  
men hear not my music in the clouds ;

My home is near to the Lord of the Heart ,

I am the Lord of Life's Brother and Playmate ,

I walk with Man from the door of Birth to the  
door of Death , waking and sleeping, by day  
and by night, I watch over him ,

I sweep from Pole to Pole and none can with-  
stand my power ,

I am the Friend of the Flowers—from one to  
another I bear sweet messages of love  
This all I do at the command of the Mother of  
Life

There stands the Mother tenderly smiling filling  
with sweetness the Quarters of the Heavens  
Yea like a spreading mountain pine She  
stands in the soft autumn twilight and it  
pleases Her that I play upon my reed for  
the comfort of all creatures that breathe

*The light dies out leaving the Hall in darkness  
After a while a kind of murky earth-light diffuses  
itself over the lower part of the Hall The guests  
hear the sound of a mighty crying like the wailing  
of a sacked city in the far distance. A voice  
broken by sighs and groans speaks from below*

#### VOICE

I come Ye ask, Who art thou ? Gods have  
not named me I call myself Humanity  
I dwell on land and in the seas I sweep through  
the air and the ether

I am man and woman and the intermediate one ,  
I am the ape and the tiger and the lamb

I wander in the woods of dark continents as the  
savagc cannibal I watch by the bedside  
of the sick in the home of mercy

I am ferocity in the beast of prey I am com-  
passion in the heart of the mother

I devour my own offspring ; I sacrifice myself to  
save others

I change—every moment, every season, every  
æon ;

I fill the pages of my history with romances  
written in blood ,

Out of my dreams of heaven I create this earth ;

I wax strong and wage war to please Death ;

I laugh at Death and hurl him into the flaming  
furnace of hell—and this I do to please my  
children

I enter the portals of Life with strong crying—  
and with a sigh I bid farewell to Life

I am prophet , I am idiot ,

I am king and shepherd and fisherman

I put my foot on the neck of kings and shepherds  
and fishermen and turn them into dust ,

And with their dust do I besmear myself and  
madly dance over green meadows.

I am—what ye fear to think of me , I will be—  
what ye love to dream of me

But I will baffle all your fond expectations and  
all your clever calculations ,

In a moment of infinite time I will take the whole  
world by the hand and lift it up to the heaven  
of my heart

I am the most erring of the High Mother's children,  
but one sure instinct I possess—I stand erect  
the moment I fall, and by the aid of the very  
obstacle that caused my fall do I rise again

I sorrow not over my shortcomings and my sufferings

I hope—yet know that my hopes are too wild to be realised.

In a part of Space called the Corner of Pain I have made my home

I breathe the atmosphere of pain—I drink from the well of pain—I eat the fruits of the tree of pain—my sleep is troubled by the dream of pain

I love not Pain—Pain loves me

The whole history of my existence is a constant fleeing from this cruel lover of mine

I have prayed to God to be delivered from him—has He heard my prayer ?

I have worshipped a million lesser divinities—nature-gods man-gods god-gods—throughout the ages hoping to be relieved of pain—have they saved me ?

I have believed in prophets saviours saints—have they healed me ?

I have listened to philosophers scientists magicians—have they protected me ?

Kings statesmen, law-givers have boldly proclaimed the gospel of peace and security—have they not themselves plunged the poisoned dagger into my heart ?

I am old as Eternity—yet I feel not the burden of eternal years

I am young as the babe of to-day—yet I am wise  
as all the hoary Bible-makers of all the races  
of the earth.

I am one—I am many , I am spirit, ghost, man,  
animal, and tree yet my hidden life flows  
ever with passionate impetuosity towards  
the distant future above the heads of  
nations

To me the least is not less than the greatest , in  
all I am their sensitiveness to pain—the pain  
of a perpetual new birth of cosmos or of  
chaos

I am large, and my largeness moves me to face  
great pain for the avoiding of great pain ;

I am strong, and my strength lies in discovering  
the source of consolation even in the moment  
of suffering from suffering itself ;

I am inured to pain—so that I delight in excite-  
ment that brings pain and inflicts pain.

Who brought this pain upon me ? Had it been  
God-given, God would one day have taken  
it away , has He taken it away ?

Had it been the gift of Nature, I would have  
revenged myself upon her , but I feel no  
enmity to Nature—I desire that she be  
endless, infinite, that I may ever conquer  
her ,

I desire to be charmed by her—yet to be her  
master , I wonder, shall I ever wish to end  
this play ?

Deeming myself the mother of my pain I seek  
the aid of floods and earthquakes war and  
pestilence and famine to bring destruction  
on myself but ever by a mysterious magic  
- I rise from my own ashes and live again  
and after my resurrection sitting in the  
dawn light by the waveless ocean Psyche  
comes and whispers to my heart 'Not  
thou, O sweet Humanity, art cause of thine  
own pain !

And I muse If I be the father of my sufferings  
how can I desire to live again ? How can I  
infiict pain upon myself ? How can I con-  
struct machinery for my own torture ?

*I know that my nature is rooted in contradiction*  
have I perhaps sought to grow at the cost  
of happiness and peace ?

Bright Powers in the heavens are watching over  
my mysterious destiny Have they lauded  
me as good and true and beautiful ? Have  
they condemned me as bad and false and  
ugly ? Who will say whether I am develop-  
ing aright ? Who will say whether the  
daily use to which I am constrained to put  
my life is not frustrating the Eternal Pur-  
pose ?

I am left alone with my unforeseeing under-  
standing and my ever forward-springing  
untamable energy



My knowledge embraces not the whole reality.  
 Perchance my sensitiveness to pain has  
 sprung from my limited uncomprehending  
 understanding True, in my own eyes I  
 grow from ugliness to beauty, from ignorance  
 to knowledge, from slavery to freedom, from  
 sin to holiness I make progress in culture  
 and civilisation—but I rise to the zenith  
 only to descend to the nadir

Henceforth I will seek new and inward space for  
 my progress In the coming age I will  
 seek to bore a tunnel in the spirit, to find an  
 inner path to the Divinity of my Heart.  
 But I will not destroy the bridges which I  
 have built during the past ages, linking  
 this earth with the distant divinity of suns  
 and moons and stars

I will be free, glorious, and immortal

*The Voice ceases.*

*Śrī Ānanda Āchārya.*

ALL this is rhythm.

May-fields, child-hearts, evening skies,

Grow corn and wisdom and stars

By the throb of rhythm ,

And Muses from the Milky Way

Nightly visit

The sleeping poet's downy pillow

By the law of rhythm ;

And angels bring him faces

Flushed with morning s rose  
 Tinted with even s quiet  
 By the sweet impulse of rhythm  
 Wait O soul !  
 Outside thy door upon the green,  
 Heaven stands expectant  
 Waiting to be ushered in  
 By Rhythm  
 Just now—or perchance to-morrow

*Śrī Ananda Achārya*  
 From Usarika'

FRIEND dwell thou  
 within my ruby lotus heart of dreams  
 Friend, see thyself  
 in the diamond mirror of my heart of hopes  
 Friend sport with me  
 in the garden walks of my heart fringed with  
*everlastings*  
 Friend sleep thou on the shore of the song  
 throated ocean of my heart  
 Friend, shine in me  
 like sunlight in the heart of a rose-bud of jade

*Śrī Ananda Achārya*  
 From Usarika

Thou art the rose  
 I am the honey  
 Thou drinkest the light  
 of the four heavens

And my soul is suffused  
with the rainbow of seven tints ;  
I give myself  
to the bees  
And become a song  
on the wings of winds  
that sing to the gods  
and the fleecy clouds  
and the sleeping children of Life.

*Śrī Ānanda Āchārya.*

From " Usarika " (Dawn-Rhythms).

SNOW-BLOSSOMS,  
snow-blossoms,  
Are  
you alive ?

In your heart  
I see  
the image  
of  
the heavens,  
the disc  
of  
the sun,

And  
when clouds  
veil

the face  
of  
the sky  
I see  
your facets  
tinted  
with  
the ink  
of  
dark sorrow

Children of Varun  
sweet guests  
of  
late Autumn  
you too  
hear  
the whispers  
of  
Immortality

Like  
our village sons,  
dwelling  
in  
lighted cottages  
by  
the gloom-canopied  
graves  
of

their departed  
ancestors

*Śrī Ānanda Āchārya.*  
From "Saki" (The Comrade).

THE  
rose of eternity  
is  
my heart,  
the  
sun-gold honey  
is  
my love  
for  
my Saki,  
the  
honey-bees  
are  
my sighs and songs,  
the  
river  
is  
my feeling  
of  
life,  
and  
the light  
of  
my Saki's  
eyes

is  
the true life  
of  
the red rose

What  
grey dews  
or  
blind canker  
can harm  
this  
ever-smiling  
rose  
of  
my heart ?

*Śrī Ananda Achārya*

From Saki.

THE blue  
of  
Indra  
is  
thy laughter  
frozen  
into  
the  
sky-ocean  
and  
these stars

and  
this earth  
are  
frozen lilies  
and  
we  
living creatures  
are  
frozen bees

O Saki,  
laugh  
no  
more.

*Śrī Ānanda*  
From "Saki"

THE shadow  
of  
a  
flying bird  
across  
the  
sun's disc  
fell  
on  
the  
still floor  
of  
my morning-quiet

cave  
and  
vanished—

*Like*  
the memory  
of  
one  
who  
passing  
through  
the  
bright shade  
of  
my garden trees  
of  
early days  
entered  
into  
the  
deep shadows  
of  
another's  
garden trees

*Śrī Ananda Achārya*  
From ' Sakl.'



LOVE'S *SAMĀDHI*<sup>1</sup>

AH, Love, I sink in the timeless sleep,  
 Sink in the timeless sleep ,  
 One Image stands before my eyes,  
 And thrills my bosom's deep  
 One Vision bathes in radiant light  
 My spirit's palace-halls ,  
 All stir of hand, all throb of brain,  
 Quivers, and sinks, and falls  
 My soul fares forth , no fetters now  
 Chain me to this world's shore  
 Sleep ! I would sleep ! ' In pity spare ;  
 Let no man wake me more !  
*Nārāyan Vāman Tīlak.*

## A CRADLE SONG

HUSH thee, hush thee, baby Christ,  
 Lord of all mankind,—  
 Thou the happy lullaby  
 Of my mind

Hush thee, hush thee, Jesus, Lord,  
 Stay of all that art,—  
 Thou the happy lullaby  
 Of my heart.

<sup>1</sup> *Samādhi* is the mystic's "ecstasy," in which all consciousness of the material world is lost and the soul is face to face with the Real

Hush thee hush thee home of peace —  
Lo ! Love lying there !—  
Thou the happy lullaby  
Of my care

Hush thee hush thee Soul of mine  
Setting all men free—  
Thou the happy lullaby  
Of the whole of me

*Nārāyaṇ Vāman Tilak*

### THE WAY OF POVERTY

Thou hadst no servants to attend on Thee  
Then why this pomp of household state for me ?  
Coarse fare and scanty was Thy portion, Lord  
Then why for me this richly furnished board ?  
Thou hadst not where to lay Thy head to rest  
Then why should I of mansions be possessed ?  
Ah hapless I ! What is this tyranny ?  
How dost Thou laugh and make a mock of me !  
Ah take from me this burden that doth bow  
My head ! blest ocean of all love art Thou !  
I speak in anger Lord yet if Thou too  
Reject my prayer what can Thy servant do ?  
Saith Dāsa Christ upon Thy pallet-bed  
Grant me a little space to lay my head

*Nārāyaṇ Vāman Tilak*

## THE LAST PRAYER

LAY me within Thy lap to rest ,  
Around my head Thine arm entwine ,  
Let me gaze up into Thy face,  
O Father-Mother mine !

So let my spirit pass with joy,  
Now at the last, O Tenderest !  
Saith Dāsa, Grant Thy wayward child  
This one, this last request  
*Nārāyan Vāman Tīlak.*

## UNION WITH CHRIST

As the moon and its beams are one,  
So that I be one with Thee,  
This is my prayer to Thee, my Lord,  
This is this beggar's plea

I would snare Thee and hold Thee ever,  
In loving wifely ways ,  
I give Thee a daughter's welcome,  
I give Thee a sister's praise.

As words and their meaning are linked,  
Serving one purpose each,  
Be Thou and I so knit, O Lord,  
And through me breathe Thy speech.

O be my soul a mirror clear  
That I may see Thee there ,  
Dwell in my thought my speech my life  
Making them glad and fair

Take Thou this body O my Christ  
Dwell as its soul within  
To be an instant separate  
I count a deadly sin

*Nārāyaṇ . . . . . lak*

## PEACE

It is the hour of sunset and the sky  
Is robed in purple as a lovely bride  
With ruby lips and veil thrown half aside  
Waiting for her sweet lord with longing eye  
The air is fresh and fragrant and the sea  
In smiling joy its boundless bosom heaves  
With ringing music of the rising waves  
And far from here its weary whisper leaves  
The broken echo of a world that raves  
Its murmur hushed in new born notes of glee

Lulled by the laughter of the sky and earth  
The heart forgets her sorrow and suspends  
Her breath in silent rapture and descends  
Upon the soul the vision of its birth.  
Immeasurable waters ! and the sky  
Immeasurable ! and this wondrous light

In rainbow smiles of India, all around—  
Resting and rocking and rolling in delight,  
And swelling with the mirth of many a sound  
That fills the ocean's ears unceasingly

And now the mantle of approaching night  
Falls gently o'er the drowsy eyes of day ;  
The roseate glow of evening melts away,  
Softly beyond the western waves, to white  
Now o'er the earth a veil of mystery  
In silver silence all around is spread ,  
And not a sound is heard or sight is seen  
Except the lingering echoes hither led  
Of boatmen's shouts, and distant lights between  
The mingling bosoms of the sky and sea

The moon hath risen, and the stars appear,  
And heaven is watching with the eyes of light ;  
And in my heart a newer hope is bright  
With varied splendours of the atmosphere  
The mind is hushed and all its motions cease  
Of wayward fancy and unquiet thought ,  
And in the happy island of the soul  
Awakes a joy in radiance unforget—  
Which o'er the world's tumultuous uncontrol  
Doth smile, and softly whisper, " Here is Peace ! "

*Nanikram Vasanmal Thadanr.*

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